Innovation and
Social Space

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Tommi Grönlund & Petteri Nisunen, *Synagogue Installation,* Centre d'Art Contemporain la Synagogue de Delme, France, 28.2-23.5.2004. Photo by Tommi Grönlund.

Marketta Seppälä

New Value for Creativity?

Creativity as a resource factor has emerged as a topic of social discussion in at least two senses.

The importance of creativity, and along with it of culture, as building blocks for life, in our formation of an image of our world, is particularly emphasised today. Rapid globalisation, the breakdown of the structures of industrial society, worsening environmental problems and talk of a clash of civilisations are inducing a general feeling of insecurity. The 'soullessness' and one-dimensionality of this world, along with visions of total catastrophe and the possibility of the final destruction of humankind are undermining traditional worldviews everywhere.

At times when the world around us has felt like it is collapsing, security has traditionally been sought variously in extreme religious or political movements and, at other times, in doctrines of racial mysticism or social terror, or in all of these. The power of myths is once again being vigorously wielded, and earthly justice and politics are increasingly frequently argued in terms of religious mission. Demonisation is following the time-honoured pattern: the guilty parties are always sought among 'others'.

So we urgently need to ask: Are other, new alternatives available?

Since everything is in any case connected to everything else, we have to try to understand substantially more complicated matters and phenomena than ever before. And what is the significance of this for everyday life, art or science, for existence in general?

The importance of creativity and culture are also emphasised in another way and on another level. According to international indicators, creativity is a factor in success, and even a direct precondition for economic growth and competitiveness in an increasingly complex world. Through this, culture emerges even more clearly than before as a national visiting card.

In Finland, too, creativity strate-

gies have been drawn up, citing international research. The latest scheme tailored to our specific circumstances is based on the concept of a *c*reative economy, which is used to argue for the importance of culture exports in particular "as part of the profitable industry of the creative economy". There is a belief that adopting an (assumed?) common language with high-level political decision-makers is the best way to get to sit at the most influential negotiating tables. The scheme relies, among other things, on the report by Professor of Futures Studies Markku Wilenius, *Luovaan talouteen. Kulttuuriosaaminen tulevaisuuden voimavarana* (Towards a Creative Economy. Cultural Competence as a Future Resource), 2004. This proposes a historical watershed in Finnish cultural policy, according to which, in the 1990s, we entered into "a period of commercialisation of culture and of promoting consumption based on a culture-industry mentality".

At regular intervals, someone always brings up the dismantling of the grant system, as is now happening on this occasion, too. The grant system is not believed capable of evaluating real competence. Now, we have to talk about value chains and their weak points, earnings logics, brands and clusters, rising trend lines, sales volumes and national images.

We can also look at this the other way round. The reason a substantial portion of Finnish contemporary art is already today thought of as 'different', and consequently as interesting, does not stem from its having had to support itself. Rather, it derives from the way that Finland, which has lacked significant art markets, has had a grant system, which has secured the

conditions in which many artists have been able to work without worrying about commercial pressures.

If a viable argument for supporting the arts is found only when national competitiveness demands it, in the intensifying competition for positive publicity, for visibility and for success, the prospects for culture are dismal. If we start from an export mentality, the goals set will specifically be marked out too narrowly, and before long the 'logical' scenario is that reason dictates that we in particular back economically successful artforms as being culturally exportworthy. This viewpoint is misleading and cultural exports are beginning to be used to direct cultural policy in a mono-directional manner. This is manifest in at least two ways.

First, a central, inbuilt precondition for the viability of any national culture, especially the cultures of small nations, is a strengthening of international contacts. Genuine contacts and cultural development are always founded on interaction, or at least bilateral interaction.

Secondly, the soil in which a culture grows is society as a whole. Experiences and insights generated by the arts are important building materials for envisaging different worlds, and in giving us a feeling of control over our lives. Publicly supported forms of culture are a part of the welfare state, in which culture is a basic service. Why does this not seem to be 'enough' for the new, creative economy?

If financial profit is stressed as the determinant of support for the arts, the different sub-areas of culture will find themselves in conflict. Under particular threat of elimina-

tion is the making of the kind of experimental art that exists on the margins, for which because of its pioneering nature there can be no 'ready-made demand', but which ultimately is – and has always been – a precondition for the emergence of everything new. Those areas which can provide the preconditions for financial profit or for the kinds of megaculture and tourist culture that offer leisure entertainment to as big an audience as possible in extravagantly marketed spectacles, do better than ever.

Right now, when there is an urgent need for investment in creativity and culture, the preconditions for the creation of anything new – experimental thought and action that transcend boundaries – should be especially safeguarded. There should be resources to support even things that do not yet exist. The making of art also has to be allowed to be unsystematic and unprofitable in order to be able to punch holes in the doctrines that surround us, and to investigate divergent paths of thought in order to see where they lead. The importance of creativity ultimately reveals itself specifically in the important questions that art asks about the foundations of the ideology and the collective moral foundations of our age.

Instead of the decision-makers being assured of the importance of culture by the use of slogans that follow the logic of the technological society of the sensation-spectacle, it might be simpler simply to trust in the decision-makers' own creativity and the ability that this gives them to gain insights. After all, they are the ones who now have to do something. +

Locating

Innovations always take place in a historical context. The difference between our time and previous times is smaller than one might think. In hindsight, we can recognize historical periods that were conducive to innovation, such as the European Renaissance, but could anybody have been able to predict in advance that such periods would happen, and how much in advance?

In our own time, the economic, technological and social systems of the information society are undergoing a process of rapid change that is altering the meaning of time and place. This transformation is especially challenging with respect to the ethical foundation of the information society. The commodification of innovations has become an increasingly important goal of the global information economy. In this situation, what becomes of the Utopia of openness, where ideas and innovations are freely accessible and where everyone has the same opportunities to produce information?

The short history of the internet shows how innovations of the information society are invented several times over. The World Wide Web, which came into being through the creative combination of existing technologies and was never patented, has brought together millions of people in less than 15 years. Tim Berners-Lee, the 'inventor' of the www, once said that had he asked even one cent of each person using the www, it would have meant that the www would never have become accessible to all people.

The growth of Linux into a challenger of Microsoft's Windows happened almost by accident, as a result of happy coincidences starting in 1991, when Linus Torvalds uploaded a piece of source code on the net – "just for fun." Today, the free Linux system would seem to be opening the way to the information society also for the poor developing countries. However, because Linux remains a complicated system, its future is an open question. The very idea of an open source code is old, as Chuck Dyke points out in his essay, dating back at least to the origins of writing, and open source has perhaps never been quite as "open" as one might wish.

The general theme of this issue of the *Framework* magazine, *Innovation and Social Space,* raises a set of questions about the relationship between art and contemporary media society. It focuses especially on the new media art, which is often considered the most innovative of current art forms because it makes such heavy use of technological innovations. Technology as such is not the issue here, however, but the opportunities it gives to new artistic expression.

But should we finally ask: is 'new media art' actually a viable category at all? Has not art, by its very nature, always been 'media art', a communication of new ideas and inventions?

Just like the history of innovations teaches, innovations in media art also take place in their particular historical context. Just as it has happened throughout history, so in the art of our time the most creative insights are the result of coincidences, the combination of existing inventions, even the "abuse" of technologies.

Marketta Seppälä
Translated by Tomi Snellman.

Ilkka Halso, *Excavation 20.7.1995,* 1997, from the series *Excavations,* chromogenic digital print on aluminium, 185 x 100 cm, edition of 6; 92.5 x 50 cm, edition of 20.

Ilkka Tuomi   Ethics of Creation

In 1851, Great Britain organized the Great Exhibition to celebrate its global superiority in industry, military and economy. The Exhibition displayed over 13,000 exhibits, coming from all corners of the Empire, as well as from "the less civilized world". Over six million visitors flocked to Hyde Park to see the marvels of the Industrial Revolution, shown in the specially constructed goliath of iron and glass, Crystal Palace.

The Crystal Palace was moved to South London after the exhibition closed, where it was destroyed by fire in 1936. Over million feet of glass is now gone, and many windows have broken. Now we all live in a crystal palace. We are surrounded by technical miracles and wonder, and a constant flow of new inventions. Innovation has become a central driver in the everyday life, politics and in the economy. Countries and regions are ranked by their "innovation capability." People are told to join the creative class. Visionaries depict futures where imagination and dreams rule the world.

The Crystal Palace exhibition was the first international celebration of technical innovation and novelty, and as such, it also displayed prevailing social beliefs about progress and the nature of inventions in a sharp relief. It was organized at a time when the Industrial Age had become real, but when it was still marginal. The new world was already created, but still taking its first steps.

Culturally, the Crystal Palace exhibition represented a credo on the idea of individual creator and novelty as a source of progress. The spirit of Crystal Palace was closely related to the new romantic image of individual personality, who becomes real to the extent that the uniqueness of the individual flourishes and is expressed.

Romantic ideals of human creativity were often formulated through poetic and artistic works. Scientists, industrialists, and innovators choose another way to celebrate the uniqueness of human individuality. Instead of operating with expressions of the inner nature of human personality, they operated on the external nature, making

machines and turning the forces of nature to new purposes. In this process, the creators encountered a fundamental dilemma of creativity. When innovation matters, it matters because it has an impact on our social and material reality. Innovation is not an end in itself. It opens a new world and new possibilities for action, and poses a question. Who will be responsible for that new world?

This question was the core of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus, in 1818. In Shelley's famous story, Frankenstein creates new life by using methods that resemble a combination of modern stem cell research and alchemy, but forgets that the outcome should also be socially acceptable. Rejected by everyone for its bad looks and smell, including its creator, the monster becomes a monster. Frankenstein successfully invents life, but ends up with a tragedy, as he finds himself incapable of taking responsibility of his creation.

In contrast with Goethe's Faust, which expresses the romantic individualistic concept of actor and personal identity in a pure form, Shelley already highlights the social embeddedness of human individuals. Identity is not something we can invent on our own. Individuality is fundamentally a social phenomenon. The concept does not make sense without the presence of others, against whom individual identity can be distinguished and for whom individual differences make a difference. Individual uniqueness, therefore, is something that is essentially given to us by others and it is reflected through the presence of others. Without these others, no mirror could show that we are ugly monsters, and without the presence of others, our cadavers would smell quite normal to us.

Shelley notes that there is a social dimension involved. She, however, still lingers somewhere between the individualistic and social concepts of identity: between the newly discovered concept of unique individual and realization of the fact that this cannot be the whole story. This creates the central ambiguity of Shelley's story, which

has resonated now almost two centuries as a counterpoint in the Gloria of Creation. Victor Frankenstein unintentionally and without much consideration launches a sequence of actions that soon escape beyond his control. It could happen to anyone. The tragic hero of the story, however, is the monster. He is a modern traveler, hit by the forces of nature and human treachery, searching a way home through rain, darkness and snow, eventually freezing in the Arctic ice.

To understand how the modern innovators could solve Frankenstein's problem, it is necessarily to dig up its roots. They can be found quite deep in the modern Western culture. In fact, they can be found in a very compact form in a philosophical error in the Book of Genesis.

The first time Genesis makes the error in question is before the first day of creation. God first creates heavens and the earth, and then starts to move over the dark surface of the waters – in a world, which, strictly speaking, is formless and void. This does not create major conceptual challenges for students of creativity and innovation, as it is easy to read the text metaphorically. The conceptually interesting point, however, emerges in the famous third verse, where God says: "let there be light."

The question is: "to whom"? What is this light that separates the day and night, before there are any created beings? Is it something that is visible to bees or bats? Or perhaps owls, trees, sharks, or mosquitoes? Is it something that humans will perceive as light, after God decides to add humans to the picture? Or should we assume that the creation starts with the universal light of God, which is visible to the God himself? Does this mean that God cannot see before he put the lights on, or in the dark corners of his creation?

The fifth day repeats this philosophical challenge in a more concrete form. After creating sea monsters, fish, and birds in the fourth day, the fifth day is the day for beasts, cattle and all creeping things. But what, exactly, is the difference between beasts and cattle? How can a creator know whether

he is creating beasts or cattle?

In fact, one may have to know the complete plans of God to know the answer. Moreover, there has to be such a plan, where all the beasts and beauties of the nature have their predefined place. Cave paintings, however, show that the difference between a beast and cattle is not easy to draw. An animal with horns and hooves that hunts humans across fields and forests, and makes them climb trees and rocks looks pretty much like a beast. If the same animal provides them with milk and cheese, it looks pretty much like cattle.

The distinction between beasts and cattle is not given in the animal itself. It depends on our relation to the animal. The essence of created things, as they become meaningful for humans, can never be found simply by looking the thing itself. Nor can the essence be found by turning back to our private beliefs. The world is not just our fiction – what we decide it to be. Instead, the meaning of things is in between the world and us. It cannot be reduced to the characteristics of the objects that surround us, and it cannot be found simply by digging into our brains and discovering beliefs that fix the reality. For this reason, the traditional Western worldview, which sees the world through the distinction between subjects and objects, and which underlies our conventional models of technology, knowledge, and innovation, necessarily becomes problematic. It can never solve Frankenstein's dilemma. It has simply conceptualized the act of creation in a contradictory and misleading way.

To address the dilemma in a proper way, we have to give up the traditional heroic model of creators. Or, more accurately, we have to first reinterpret what innovators and innovations are, and then enhance the heroic conceptualization of creation so that it becomes coherent. Here it is useful to start from the traditional model of innovation, as economists and schoolbook histories often describe it.

The conventional way to describe innovation is to explain it as a linear sequence. First, an inventor makes

an invention. This is the original act of creation, where light descends over the heroic genius, light bulb goes on, and a new idea is born. In this story, Nobel Price winners climb mountains and suddenly realize that human genomes are twisted spirals; wake up from nightmares where snakes eat their own tail and realize that chemicals form cycles; and, in general, experience a flash of revelation of the inner workings of the nature.

World, however, is full of such inventions. From the social and economic point of view, the real innovation activity starts when the idea is developed into something that works. This phase has typically been the focus of innovation theorists who have studied the economic and historical aspects of innovation. In modern business organizations, this phase is often called "new product development."

When the product is ready, it still has to be taken into use. If the users – in the modern world they are also called customers – like the product, it diffuses and penetrates the society. The conventional sequential model of innovation, therefore, consists of phases that are typically described as invention, development, product launch, and diffusion.

Modern theories of innovation have refined this linear model by adding feedback between the different phases of the process, and interactions between the innovation process and its economic and social environment. A more radical revision, however, becomes necessary if we realize that new products and innovations gain their meaning only after they are taken into use. They become cattle or beasts only after they are tamed as cattle or left to haunt us as beasts. This means that the true act of creation occurs when the users become creative and find new meaning in the world that surrounds them.

In practice, this distinction is important. It implies that the traditional "inventors" have little control over the "innovativeness" of their works, and that users decide what counts as an innovation. An innovation can be created using novel products, technol-

ogies, or knowledge. It can, however, also be created by reinterpreting already existing technologies, knowledge, and products. This is what happens every day around us. It would be easy to see if the heroic model of innovation would not be so deeply embedded in our systems of belief.

In practice, people constantly find new innovative ways to use material artifacts and knowledge. The classical example is telephone. When it was introduced in the U.S., innovators and entrepreneurs speculated that it would be used to broadcast news, wheat prices, church services, and lullabyes that would put children to sleep. The modern use of telephony – as a communication medium between people and a means for "social visiting" across distance – was invented by American housewives, decades after the technology first became available. Similarly, short text messages on modern mobile phones were originally intended for simple technical messages and general notices, and the designers of telecommunication equipment had no idea that text messages would in just a few years become the main source of profits for telecommunication operators. Many Internet technologies have also been created in this same mode by the users. First, engineers have designed new technical functionality from their own point of view and for their own purposes, and then the users have reinterpreted the possibilities of the new technical functionality, becoming the drivers in technical evolution. This pattern underlies the history of the World Wide Web, email, peer-to-peer file sharing, as well as the core technologies of the Internet itself.

At the time when new innovations are created and produced they have "interpretative flexibility," which is not controlled by the original creators and producers. To understand innovation, we therefore have to understand how the users actually create meaningful interpretations of material artifacts that emerge in the world. One way to understand this is to use language as an analogy.

When new concepts are introduced in language, they gain their

meaning in social contexts where these concepts are used. New concepts and words become real when they become useful tools in social practices. Concepts are deeply practical. They are not abstract immaterial things; instead, they are the substrate of social reality, which becomes expressed through communicative and other acts. Words matter when they make a difference and create useful distinctions. If they do not make a difference, they do not matter.

Language is inherently social, and linguistic distinctions have to be socially relevant. We cannot invent private words or private languages. Words exist only in a complex system of language, where concepts gain their meaning through a multitude of pragmatic links with the underlying social reality. During our individual history we learn words and concepts and their interrelated meanings, which are grounded in historically developed social practices. In our lifetime, we advance in this field of linguistic learning so that we are able to become participants in multiple linguistic practices and genres. Our poetic contributions can also expand these practices. The underlying cultural stocks on meaning, however, always remain the slowly moving foundation on which we have to build socially meaningful interpersonal communication.

The social foundation of language, however, is not formless void without structure. In a social world, we cannot float over a flat surface, waiting for the right moment of creation. As the Genesis teaches us, worlds are created by making distinctions: by separating days from nights, heaven from earth, fish from birds, beasts from cattle. These distinctions are useful because they make a difference. The appropriate distinctions, however, depend on what we do and who we are. If we are blind, the difference between night and day cannot be based on light or its disappearance. If we do not know how to milk a cow, beasts and cattle look the same. If we have a spear, a beast may look like food. If Prometheus brings us fire, trees may start to look firewood and the dark corners

of a cave may start to look like a canvas for creation.

Social structures of knowing and acting, therefore, define the way in which the members of a society understand and interpret the world. These structures, in turn, are closely related to those social practices that we engage with in our everyday life. Many of these practices are commonly shared by the members of a specific culture. Some practices are relatively universal even across cultural boundaries. In the modern society, which is characterized by complex social division of expertise and labor, many practices are, however, strongly located. People learn these practices during their life histories, through education and socialization. In this process, they become competent members of those social groups that carry these practices. Doctors become doctors, engineers become engineers, poets become poets, and watchmakers become watchmakers.

When new technical tools and artifacts are thrown into this landscape of social practices, the different potential user groups try to make sense of the new opportunity. If they recognize it as an opportunity, they may adapt their current practices to take advantage of the opportunity. Instead of sending a messenger, for example, they may pick up a phone, and instead of picking up the phone they may send a text message.

Sometimes this adoption process is easy and straightforward. This happens, for example, when an existing social practice simply becomes implemented using a new tool that makes the current practice more convenient. Often innovations, however, require change in social practices before their potential can be realized. Typically, this implies change in the established social relations within the community that consists of the practitioners. Strictly speaking, innovation, therefore, implies revolution. The revolution may appear as relatively smooth evolution, but often it also becomes a bloody battle among the participants.

The different social groups that play different roles in the society are

also in many ways interdependent. This means that when one group changes its practices, often also other groups have to adjust their practices. The effects of innovation, therefore, often propagate across several communities of practice. Technological innovation, for example, can reorganize and recombine social relations between groups, sometimes making some groups quite irrelevant for the rest of the society. If the group has sufficient resources, the potential threat of oblivion can lead to conventional revolutions, as well.

In this sense, all innovations are social innovations. Innovations become real when new technical gadgets or concepts are taken into use in a social group that carries a specific social practice. This is the true moment of creation. The flash of creative light does not strike an individual inventor; instead, it shines on a community of practitioners.

This also means that ethics and innovation are inseparable. Communities that carry specific social practices perceive the world using those distinctions that make sense in the community. When a person looks up to the nightly sky, what she sees depends on whether she is a navigator on a ship, poet, meteorologist, or an astronomer. The stars are not fixed: they change their nature depending on what we do on earth and to which social practices we are participating.

Each community of practice has its own way to perceive the world and orient in it. Its way of making distinctions in the world depends on the relevance of these distinctions in relation to the activities of the community. The relevance or irrelevance of the phenomena of the world, in turn, rests on historically accumulated value systems that organize the life of the community. Each community has its own ideas of what is good and valuable, and these fundamental value orientations define the dimensions of the world, as the community perceives it.

Ethics of innovation, therefore, requires that we understand how local value systems interact and how their boundaries can be crossed. In the global information society, this requirement becomes increasingly acute. Information and communication now flow across the world, making local communities increasingly transparent to the rest of the universe. Information networks are becoming networks of cultural diversity.

This also means that innovation and politics are inseparable. When new technologies and knowledge reorganize social relations within and across communities, the ways in which this happens depends on the power relations in the society. As the users are the focal creators of new innovations, the political question is: Who is allowed to define new innovative ways of acting in the society? From a political point of view, when innovations are turned into a reality, this means that their ambiguity and interpretative flexibility is reduced in a process in which some voices speak louder than others. Who has a voice and how loud it is heard, depends on the political principles implemented in the society and culture in question.

Frankenstein's monster never gained a voice in its community, and therefore it was left without means of communication. In such a situation, attempts to participate in the social sphere become undirectional, violent, and asocial. To get its point through, the monster starts to kill people. When words do not have enough meaning, people throw stones.

Words may have insufficient meaning also because they mean so different things in different communities. The impact of innovation or social change can therefore never be fully explained within one single community, using one specific local language or value system. This implies that innovative activity has to be accompanied by an ethic that is based on listening to others. The starting point of ethics of creation has to be openness to alternative interpretations.

This, however, also implies that the attempt to solve ethical problems by gathering more information and facts is doomed to fail. In the enlightenment tradition, more knowledge was supposed to lead to a more accurate picture of the world. According to this view, better information and knowledge would finally allow us to take into account all the relevant facts, and we could eventually decide what is good or bad. The problem, however, is that there are many incompatible value systems in the society, and the criteria of relevance vary across the different communities in the society. Therefore there cannot be any universal lists of criteria that could be used to add up and weight the facts. The only way to solve this problem is to bring the participants together and allow them to communicate. The ethics of innovation has its foundation in a political process, which cannot be replaced by any given set of "hard facts." What counts as a "fact" depends on the underlying worldview, and the worldview depends on the value system that underlies the community in question. Although people often are members of many different communities, and can jump from one value system to another depending on what they are doing, there are no society-wide communities of practice. This is because the modern society is fundamentally based on social diversification and complex division of labor.

The enlightenment vision of solving ethical problems by collecting information on the consequences and impacts of new technologies is doomed to fail for the same reason. Information always emerges within a context where it can make sense. Information is not universal, and bits and facts always remain rooted in social practices and communities that represent specific pragmatic interests in the complexity of the real world. Frankenstein can therefore never take responsibility of his creative acts on his own, using only his personal horizons of perception and understanding. If he wants to be an ethical innovator, he should talk to the monster and ask what it thinks, and he should also ask what the rest of the village wants. In the modern world, we have to move even further, and cross regional and cultural boundaries. There are no ultimate and final answers. The process is an end in itself. +
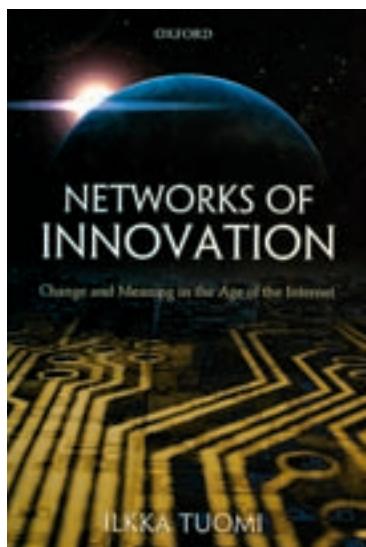
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Chuck Dyke
Open Source Art and Distributed Genius:

Around 1495 Leonardo got the gig for the refectory in Milan. Apparently he had a bright idea about an innovative way to do *freschi*. Well, *The Last Supper* began to deteriorate nearly immediately, and now, half a millennium later, the best estimate is that from 17 to 19 percent of the original remains. No matter what a genius you are, you can't win 'em all.

Innovation is the creation of something new and *better*. If you don't win, it's not an innovation. Anyone in love or in league with the arts certainly ought to be interested in that. Granted, the nature of creativity, and what makes something really new are the sorts of issues philosophers talk about interminably without settling. We'll have to be careful not to add epicycles, but to see if we can find something Copernican. Ilkka Tuomi may give us a promising start. He's found a context of innovation that nicely parallels that of the arts. Tuomi tells us the tale of Linux, the living legend of software development. From its beginnings as the personal project of Linus Torvalds (working at the University of Helsinki), it has grown, expanded, and been elaborated by the creative intelligence of a network of more than 400 free spirits. They've collaborated and cooperated for more than a decade on the largest and most successful open source project in the history of computer programing. Linux has become a significant – and still growing – competitor operating system to those of the international giants: Microsoft and the rest.

Innovation and improvement have taken place at a nearly constant rapid rate in Linux to keep it competitive with the other systems and even outrun them in some ways. This innovation and improvement continues. Yet there is no profit motive driving the advance: Linux is essentially free to all; and no corporate genius has organized the expertise that innovation and improvement depend on: participation in development is free to all (who prove to be qualified) as well. What accounts for this anarchist miracle?

It's not a miracle. In Tuomi's view, the success of Linux is a fine example of the way in which intelligence and talent can self-organize into an effective community of innovation. This view contrasts with the traditional picture of the inventive hero leading the way to innovative advance, and it contrasts with the view that masses of capital marshalled by foresighted captains of industry are responsible for technological innovation. Instead, a project oriented, problem solving community evolves a division of labor and mutually self-critical ethos that manages to be headless without in any way being mindless.

Their interactive pursuit of the goals of the project and solutions to emerging problems (bugs, etc. in this case) produces "by itself" the structure of the productive community. Inclusion in the community is contingent only on productive contribution: no one "hires and fires," though the community as a whole might turn its back on unproductive, disruptive, or otherwise troublesome potential members. The image is one of a democracy of expertise, creativity, and skill, with the requirements of responsibility internalized in the relationships between the members of the innovative community themselves. Linux works – better and better – because those responsible for it work together.

Well, possibly so. There are other dedicated cooperative communities to be found. The question that always arises about them is how robust they are, how long they last: in other words, the question of their stability. In any case, it's certainly well worth finding and studying such self-organized communities as an alternative to the more authoritarian organizations that dominate the world of business and industry. Focusing on self-organized communities also produces a contrast with any obsession with the identification of innovative geniuses: romantic heroes of creativity. One of the perennial attractions of individualistically cast accounts of innovation is that they pinpoint where praise and other rewards are to be handed out. In the corporate world, where patents and ownership dominate, this means that we can find who to pay or promote. In the world of art, we identify the one to be lionized. Tuomi's view, in contrast, aims to find the cooperative conditions within which innovation emerges. The answer to "Who's responsible?" tends to be "We all are."

What, then are the conditions of cooperation? Well, two particularly interesting "words" never appear in Tuomi's book: DOS and Windows. Yet any account of the formative dynamics of the Linux project, self-organizing or otherwise, must consider the possible effect on those dynamics of DOS and Windows as boundary conditions. A near total dependence of *most of the world* on those operating systems, along with the frustrations and resentments associated with this dependence just can't be ignored.

Linux needs Windows. That's why it's so strange that Tuomi never sets this scene. Microsoft, IBM, Apple, Intel, and the rest provided the (brief) tradition that Linux can then colonize. The criteria for success and failure are theirs, not Linux's. As we say, they set the standard, even when the standard has its faults. The criteria separating innovation from meaningless novelty are theirs as well, though Linux could wriggle into a position of some influence in this regard – in effect, becoming part of the tradition. The determinacy of the criteria for innovation – improvement, after all – obscure the fact that the interactive dependencies in the art world and those in the computer world are very like. Those who would like to emphasize the "economic" aspects of the situation will have to be happy with the concession that everyone has to eat to live. Linux genuinely did manage to innovate very near the fractal edge of the market internally, but without the energy resources, demand for rapid information exchange, etc. provided by the world economy they'd have had nothing to innovate about. In *our* world there's no ignoring the boundary conditions imposed by world economy.

The success of the Linux community up to now is genuine. Its fate in the long run remains to be seen. Before we leave it to explore Tuomi's analytical models on other turf, a couple of questions have to be raised. First, we'll find that self-organized systems tend to be opportunistic and particular – even idiosyncratic. They emerge out of the interaction of contingencies, not the unfolding of necessities, so generalizations about them are hard to come by. This means that our understanding of them is not a matter of finding the "laws" of which they're particular instances. Details, and the patterns the details form, always have to be considered.

Second, like all non-linear systems, the ones that end up in self-organization are extremely sensitive in their developmental phases. While they may end up being pretty stable, the configuration in which they're stable can be quite special. For instance, to understand the stability of the Linux community, we'd have to understand the role of Linus Torvalds himself. He's painted as a first-among-equals, in the attempt to emphasize the openness of the open source environment. Yet every time he appears, for example in email exchanges involving dispute resolution, he appears with enormous authority. He obviously "owns" Linux in a way no one else does. His authority and power seem to be far more deeply entrenched than anyone else's. How could it be otherwise, of course, but it raises the perennial question about dedicated communities. Can they survive the withdrawal or demise of the founding figure? To what degree does the presence of Linus himself constitute the keystone of stability conditions of the community? To what degree does the continuance of the community depend on his (near) saintly presence? Most such operations fail to survive the withdrawal of their founder. In the case of Linux this may be a *de facto* moot point, since the lifetime of the operating system itself may be as limited as that of Torvalds, but it does tend to challenge the image of a community of equals.

To what degree does Linux become a holy crusade for developers, end users, bug collectors and so on? To what degree does the enormous presence of the Microsoft systems

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Reflections on Tuomi's *Networks of Innovation*

and policies hold together the Linux project when it would otherwise fragment and fall apart? I certainly don't know the answer to that, but anecdotal encounters with loyal supporters of Linux have tended to feel like encounters with a religious faithful, and if this proved to hold up in the broad picture, Tuomi's entire account of the dynamics of the Linux project would have to be seriously revised.

In any case, the model of self-organization as an explanatory tool is far from being a labor saving device. In systems sensitive to details, details are obviously important. We'll see that this is especially true of the arts, and even more especially true when innovation, the rise of the new, is involved. For example, Leonardo knew how to paint *freschi*. "The source code was open." Early in the *Quattrocento* Cennino Cennini had written a definitive treatise on the subject. Traditions, workshops, and apprenticeships were there to teach Leonardo, and he'd learned. But he decided to try it a different way. Who knows? Maybe he got colors and effects unknown to previous fresco painting that made the original work, briefly, more beautiful than it otherwise could have been. It certainly was lavishly praised at the time. Only the test of time was flunked.

Of course in some cases the test of time may not have to be passed. As Tuomi tells us, it takes a lot of contextualization to make good sense of the concept of innovation. In a society of planned obsolescence and urban renewal, a "failure" like Leonardo's needn't be a failure at all. Only when we insist on archival permanence is Leonardo's innovation a failure. In a "throw-away" society it could have been an absolutely brilliant innovation. If you knew that the monastery was only going to be there a generation or so, why go to all the trouble of striving for eternity; or, to prejudice the issue the other way, only if a fresco is fetishized and sacrilized would it be worth complaining about its durability. In contrast, for example, Cristo's works are *meant* to be ephemeral.

Our world is full of potential innovations poised between success

and failure. In Barcelona, for example, Gaudi works rust, rot, and crumble, sometimes faster than they can be built. Examples of this sort ought to convince us to contrast innovation with sheer novelty, and look for qualitative standards when we want to cite something as an innovation. Whatever the minor failures may have been, Leonardo and Gaudi were all well contextualized in periods of artistic flourishing – and innovation. In Leonardo's case in particular, the art world was in the midst of an intense period of self-organization (reorganization) in several dimensions. It was the Renaissance, after all, which meant that a sense of rebirth in continuity with antiquity became a structural feature of the ethos of the arts, driving, among other things extensive stylistic innovation. The rebirth of geometry and its strong coupling to the arts (Brunelleschi, Alberti, Piero, et alia) was an enormous source of innovation. Think domes, think perspective.

Doesn't the Renaissance return us to the image of the creative genius as the source of innovation? For all the innovation and genius we could remind ourselves about from the late *Quattrocento*, we also have to remind ourselves that no one *caused* the Renaissance. The sheer absurdity of thinking that there's a (linear) cause or causes for something like the emergence of a cultural context such as the world of late 15th century Italy is what prompts the search for new explanatory resources such as the ones Tuomi employs to study the emergence of Linux. We know that a search through the enormous complexity of social and cultural life over a long period isn't going to unearth any event or person who made the Renaissance happen. Tuomi's view, shared by many these days, is that it doesn't take something as vast as the Renaissance to defeat explanation in terms of linear cause, even when what's to be explained involves a conspicuous central figure or figures: a Torvalds or a Gaudi.

The alternative is to articulate the relations between a wide range of "players" in, say, the game of culture,

and watch for patterns of cohesive activity to result. Learning is one of the most interactive of activities, for example, and oases of learning emerge among creative innovative people. Sometimes they remain informal; sometimes they crystalize into "educational institutions." Then the oases leak into one another, as, for example, the Renaissance intellectuals who we would now call mathematicians began to have their work seep into the visual arts, architecture and music. Importantly, newly learned things leaked back from the arts into the mathematics – as, for example, in the Galileo family. The point is to focus on the contextual "boundary conditions," the interactions, and the emergence of coherently structured activity. Innovation emerges out of this sort of complexity. Not surprisingly, many studies of Renaissance culture (including Burckhardt) provide accounts that fit this pattern well, without making a theoretical fuss about self-organization as an explicit explanatory rubric.

We can never forget, though, that in order to understand innovations we have always to be able to say why they're good for something, and maybe even better than what went before. Here the Renaissance artists and artisans were in good shape. They knew what the arts were all about. They knew what to admire, praise, and adopt for their own work. Even styles could be compared in this way, and count as innovations. The treatises of the time, written by the artists themselves, were unhesitating in their judgments of excellence. They may have envied the innovators, and competed with them for the juicy commissions, but they judged candidly. (What they said about each other in private when the wine was flowing is lost in the mists of time.)

Tuomi is good about drawing our attention to the values alive in the world in which innovation takes place. We need to know how structure develops to promote and manage those values, for they define the meaning space of innovation. Following an old distinction, he looks at some of these values as internal to the activ-

ity, and some external. This usually means something like "the activity valued for its own sake," and "the activity valued for the sake of something else." This may not be very useful, in the end. There will surely be disagreements about not only what values are at stake, but also whether they're internal or external. And we're surely going to have to identify the activity we're talking about very carefully, because, of course, values external to one activity will often be internal to another. In fact, any amicable division of labor depends on this to some extent. The world of Linux is a pretty simple one, once the project of creating an operating system is identified as the focus, so it's fairly easy to see what values are internal or external for the cast of characters to be taken into account. Making end users happy with their word processing is a value pursued by the programmers and developers as an end, and is a source of satisfaction, but it isn't necessarily an internal value of the sort that the challenge and excitement of the development process is. The end users, by and large, probably have no interest in the developers' internal rewards.

Contrast that with the world of art, where a multifariously motivated crowd of people, maybe all of us, swirls around in a division of labor that tends to twist back on itself. How in the world are internal and external values going to be distinguished? How were they distinguished for Brunelleschi? Was fame an internal reward? How about the glory of Florence? For today's artist, in a society that rewards in money, is wealth an internal or an external reward? Be careful, the romantic conception of the noble starving artist could be clouding your eyes.

Of course Ghiberti tells us "I, O most excellent reader, did not have to obey [a desire for] money, but gave myself to the study of art, which since my childhood I have always pursued with great zeal and devotion. In order to master the basic principles [of art] I have sought to investigate the way nature functions in art; and in order that I might be able to approach her, how images come to the eye, how the pow-

er of vision functions, how visual [images] come, and in what way the theory of sculpture and painting should be established." (*Commentarii,* from Holt, ed. 1947 etc.) Here monetary reward is shoved to the background in favor of devotion to art – but certainly not art for art's sake.

The point is that there isn't much point in distinguishing internal and external values, even, and especially, if we want to explain the dynamics of a system of innovation in terms of how the various players are motivated by these values. In fact it may be more useful to ask about how each of these "values" relates a given player to the other players: how one artist is related to another; how patrons are related to artists; how any of them are related to tradition; etc. The reason it seems important to Tuomi to distinguish internal from external values, as it was for lots of others before him, is that he wants to break out of the boundaries of theories of innovation that assign them causes entirely within the realm of economics. Linux is certainly a good example for this purpose, but the distinction between internal and external values isn't going to get the job done. Moreover, the complex tangle of values encountered in systems of innovation more complex and complexly situated than Linux call for more effective ways to represent values. In the Renaissance, for example, the presence of economies in the modern sense is problematic, but, in any case, there certainly was no art "market" to form the locus of external values. Patronage, whether individual or institutional, doesn't constitute a market.

As Pierre Bourdieu has shown in *Distinction*, even in today's world, dominated by the economic "market," matters of class, status, and prestige are of primary importance for participation in the art world. People seek to distinguish themselves there – in terms of superior taste and the like. In fact, among *afficionados* there's a race for distinction, since to be "the first to discover" an artist, a lost or forgotten work, or a technique is one of the keys to distinction.

The race for distinction quite naturally produces a demand for novelty.

Novelty, in this context, tends to militate against the formation of community. The romantic image of the solitary artist is at home here. We remember the hero of Camus' story who dies having scrawled one word on an otherwise blank canvas. The word may be "solitary" and it may be "solidary." It's impossible to tell which. Very often communities of innovation around this race for distinction aren't communities of innovators, but, rather, communities that arbitrate novelty.

For a modern parallel to Leonardo and Linux we can take the case of Jackson Pollock. It's well known, well documented, and there's a terrific movie we can watch to get the full flavor of the situation. In fact, I'll follow the story of the movie. At worst, challenging the way the story is told will be a good way for dissenters to test the explanation built on it. Pollock is as good a candidate as we could ever find to be the hero innovator. The move to make in order to follow Tuomi is to show that the account of Pollock as an innovator has to be much more complex than the story of the artist as innovative hero. In this case, for example, Peggy Guggenheim and the circle around her have an important place.

Before his greatest innovations (call it drip painting – finding language is very hard if we try to do more justice to it) Pollock was already "recognized" as a "good" painter. Those who recognized his talent early on were his fellow painters. In terms of what they were trying to do, and, more important, thought they *ought* to be trying to do, Pollock was an accepted success. In other words, an ethos and an aesthetic had emerged among painters in New York and its area of influence. When Lee Krasner went to look at his paintings, on the advice of yet another fellow painter, she immediately saw them in the framework of that aesthetic ethos, and made a confident judgment about them. In fact, as the story goes, she immediately began to try to *place* Pollock in an already evolved classification system ("surrealist," "abstract expressionist," and so on) and was pleased to find that Pollock won't fit the pigeon holes very well at all. He was something more.

Now, you could ask who decid-

ed that Pollock's drippings were the sought-for breakthrough moving the painting world into, say, exciting new regions of abstract expressionism. Was it Peggy Guggenheim? Lee Krasner? The point about moving to the consideration of innovative communities is to move past trying to answer those questions. Without forgetting or minimizing the role of Guggenheim, Krasner, or anyone else, we should be looking at the question of how a decisive community evolved. We should be looking at the continuities in the art world that provide the conditions for the organization of the community, and the discontinuities that give it its distinctive identity. In particular, we should look at the interactions between those involved rather than looking at their individual actions as isolated atoms of activity. Pollock had lots of talent (in retrospect), but needed recognition and affirmation. Guggenheim had lots of money, but needed recognition, and available talent to recognize. The various critics had the monopoly of circulation of information and opinion. They too needed the talent to recognize, but they also needed the lack of talent in other painters to "prove" their possession of discerning taste. (Every four-year-old who brings home his work from pre-school is an artistic prodigy, and the refrigerator the scene of his or her one person show. When you grow up, the hurdles are a lot higher.)

Each of the principals needed the others in order to form the meaning space within which their activity could have significance. They also need the history of their forebears to have prepared like spaces of meaning to give root to the present one. The arts are human practices, rooted deep and with long-standing authority. No one can be an artist, a critic, a patron, or a curator without that history. No one would pay a dime for paint on canvas without that history. Tradition defines the commonwealth of art.

Here a useful contrast can be made between the visual arts and music. Conditions defining traditions for musical subcultures tend to be more conservative and less flexible than for subcultures of the other arts. The musical traditions of all cultures are for-

malized and standardized; in fact in many cases more stably and conservatively than languages themselves. In European culture, change is periodized so that the conditions for innovation are punctuated. Performance practices, and even instruments are firmly associated with these periods, and we become ever more insistent on "authenticity" of performance (even when we don't have a real clue about what the original practices were). Early music "should" be played on early instruments (viols, shawms, rebecs etc.); Baroque music on harpsichords and other instruments of the period; distinct vocal styles are cultivated; and so forth. Details of tempo, phrasing, intonation, and so forth are assiduously sought. So the musical subcultures develop standards of "getting it right" of a sort that make it possible to *limit* innovation in favor of orthodoxy. While each new composition is different from preceding ones, the differences are highly bounded. Innovation is confined to the *avant garde* who, if they're lucky, get to start a new period (soon canonized). Also limited are the ways in which music from different periods can legitimately be compared. Josquin and Stravinsky can both be great composers – in their own terms as those terms are located in a periodized musical landscape.

Interestingly, Wynton Marsalis has argued that the same can be done for jazz, famously the paradigm of innovative idiom. On the documentary video *Blues and Swing* (Columbia Music 1988) he says that *genuine* innovation in jazz can be held to objective standards once we get serious about the essential components defining jazz as a distinctive tradition. These components are summed up in the words "blues" and "swing." In this case too, a main result is that we can acknowledge Buddy Bolden and Wynton Marsalis as great jazz trumpet players, framing them historically. Marsalis makes these points in the context of a master class where he is urging the students to learn the history of their tradition, and to take it seriously.

Finally, I think that when we come to assess the new thoughts on self-organizing systems, either through Tuomi or through other lines

of thought, one of the most intriguing consequences is a new way of thinking about democracy in the context of social structure [this is discussed by Lasse Peltonen and Markus Laine in their contributions in Y. Haila & C. Dyke (eds), *How Nature Speaks. The Dynamics of the Human Ecological Condition*, Duke University Press, 2005]. Indeed, I think this is an underlying unstated subtext in Tuomi's account itself. The underlying *issues* are at least as old as Plato.

We've seen that to assess innovation we have to apply standards: Pollock's paintings are brilliant, we say, and Leonardo's new fresco technique was a bust. But who are the "we?" who get the say? In many theories of democracy, both old and new, the "we" were thought of as undifferentiated individuals. Apparently the accident of being born human should be enough to qualify anyone and everyone to offer an "opinion" on any matter under consideration. Call this "the open source" theory of democracy. It's a caricature, and a dangerous one, for democracy itself. It plays into the hands of whatever elitism prevails at any given time. It did in Plato's view (at least in *The Republic*), and it continues to do so today. The distinction between high and popular culture, the distinction between the fine and applied arts, and a host of ancillary distinctions are the descendants of Plato's rationalism (most often in one of its religious manifestations). Distrust of "the masses" follows right along. This is a standard trope of nearly every introductory philosophy course.

Most of the troubles lie in the fact that there's nothing very democratic about truth. Truth provides the boundaries of the path that the Linux developers take to their innovations and improvements, and it provides the boundaries that take us from the cradle to the grave. There are certainly many opportunities to doubt the truth of this or that proposed truth along the way, but no amount of epistemological juggling can relieve us of the necessity of getting things right a decent amount of the time. You can't vote truth out of office; and wealth will help only if you know the right place to spend it. As I said, this is fa-

miliar turf. If Plato's suggestion isn't to your liking, and if democratic society is, then something has to be done about managing the tyranny of truth.

The democratic response on the open source model always has something to do with education. This too is obvious. In the case of Linux, only those highly qualified in computer science can enter the circle of open source coding; only they can "vote." Only education can qualify them for entry. The extent of the democracy is limited thus. Large modern polities – nation states and other political unities – notoriously have a much more difficult time of it. The question of the extent of democracy is one of the big issues of our time; and I don't intend to deal with it here, except for the reminder that the problems of political democracy are always cast in the context of open source democracy. Nation-states are certainly not self-organizing democratic communities, cooperative and interactive. The latter are characteristically smaller, more tightly bounded groups. Perhaps this is decisive for their ability to handle democracy of interactive participation.

I think that the reason the problem of democracy is radically changed for self-organized communities is that it's "solved" by the conditions of entry themselves; and, in fact, this is what self-organization means. In simplest form, people form dedicated social structures by mutual recognition of varying but meshing competence. In cases like the arts, traditions of earlier organization mediate the structure of the new one, but are changed by the social circumstances. (There's evidence that Peggy Guggenheim thought of herself as a successor to the Medici, not only in the role of patron, but also in the role of, let's say, master of taste. Conoisseurship is as traditional as virtuosity.)

Now, we can see these communities nesting in the art world all around us. They organize around simply every genre, facet, – and fad. Roadies and groupies and members of the board of directors of the Metropolitan Opera are all participants in such communities. The qualifications for participation vary greatly. From the point

of view of the dynamics of self-organization this variation is expectable and easy to understand. The emerged right to participate is bound to vary with the requirements of knowledge, savvy, skill, and resources. The variations determine differences in the nature of the possibility spaces for democratic participation. The case of Linux is indeed an instructive one in this regard.

Self-organized democracies almost always have a division of labor. All people aren't created equal. That's after all, why they have to get organized. So, Peggy Guggenheim couldn't paint, and Jackson Pollock couldn't have managed a family fortune even if he'd had one. Once Peggy started to engage in her role(s) actively, she couldn't function as an art critic – even despite her expertise. This radical division of labor, as well as the mutual recognition of differential talents and resources obviously flies in the face of many democratic ideals: or, ironically, flies in the face of the ideal of facelessness, the ideal of open source democracy.

There's something profound in the fact that we can regenerate the "Plato problem," the problem of reconciling democracy with knowledge, over and over again. What the virtually perpetual emergence of self-organized communities of art, skill, and expertise seems to show is that there's a way to reconcile the production of quality and the conditions for innovation. While theoretically insoluble on the model of open source democracy, it's practically manageable in the formation of communities of interactive intelligence. Linux isn't an open source democracy. Software is never actually open source on the strict democratic ideal. "Theoretically," "subjunctively," "hypothetically" it's open source, where the inverted commas are removed by some hand-waving about education; but that's totally irrelevant. Similarly, the world of art is subjunctively open to all – to daub, to bang away at marble, to bang away on the piano, and so on; but once qualitative judgments are made, this openness is irrelevant as well. We all have to find our niche in the world of art – if we want one – and one of the full-

est niches is "disappointed wannabee." The world of the gallery and the museum is closed to the aspirations of most of us, except as appreciative spectators.

There can be no democracy of talent. Linux shows that just as well as any of the arts do. On the other hand, there can be democracy of shared purpose; and it's around this democracy that communities self-organize. Such communities are as ephemeral or as abiding as the purposes driving them. Their robustness depends on a whole raft of contingencies of persons and place. Under some reasonable scenarios, the Linux project could continue for a long time (like a hurricane). Under other equally plausible scenarios, it could evaporate into thin air (like a hurricane). Communities that have a long respected tradition to sustain them last a long time. They can sustain themselves through long creative droughts, and wait for the innovations that will let them thrive again. Communities that have no such "historical flywheels" are vulnerable to dissolution. The arts have proven tremendously robust. But notice, they're robust in almost every cultural tradition on earth, and that means that the conditions of their robustness vary greatly. Everyone wants to find the magic root of art in the human soul. All the model of self-generating and regenerating communities guarantees is that there are roots; not that it's always the same root.

The heroic struggle against a common foe (Microsoft, for example) can surely be one of the roots of a dedicated community of purpose. This is a dangerous situation, though, for the stability conditions of the community are entwined with the stability conditions of the adversary. It may be better not to win, for it could be that the creative energy sustaining the community might not survive victory. On the other hand, perpetual war can become institutionalized, and crystalize the institutional structure of the perpetual adversaries. No account of the formation and stability of Linux can be adequate without taking such matters seriously. In any case, it doesn't look as if Microsoft is going to disappear in the foreseeable future. +

Ilkka Halso, *Kitka-River*, 2004, from the series *Museum of Nature*, chromogenic digital print prepared on aluminium, 183 x 300 cm, edition of 6; 91 x 150 cm, edition of 10.

Bruno Latour is Professor at the Centre de sociologie de l'Innovation at the Ecole nationale supérieure des mines in Paris (since 1982), and has, for various periods, been visiting professor at the University of California, San Diego, the London School of Economics and the History of Science department at Harvard University.

Iconoclash: Two Years After

An Interview with Bruno Latour

Bruno Latour is an amazingly productive and versatile thinker who has published numerous books on various themes. He is best known for his work on science and technology and their impact on current ways of life. Originally trained in theology and philosophy, he was introduced to anthropological methods while doing civilian service in Africa. The combination of this experience with his early interest in knowledge and science led him to do ethnographic research in the laboratory in the 1970s, and to become one of the founders of a new research approach in the then nascent 'science studies' (*Laboratory Life*, together with Steve Woolgar, 1979). His important works in this field also include *Science in Action* (1987), *The Pasteurization of France* (1988, French original 1984). Broader considerations about knowledge, society and modernity are contained in his books *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993, French original 1991), *Pandora's Hope. Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (1999) and *Politics of Nature* (2004, French original 1999).

Latour′s work, as is always the case with creative thinkers, has given rise to controversy and criticism. But it seems that when the critics have finally shown up, Latour has already moved on to new themes. One of his recent interests has been art, particularly the role of images in society. He co-curated the exhibition *Iconoclash* in Karlsruhe in 2002, and co-edited an extensive catalogue to accompany the exhibition.(1)

This interview was made in late September 2004 by Yrjö Haila and Turo-Kimmo Lehtonen, via e-mail.

Q: Iconoclash, the exhibition shown in Karlsruhe in 2002, is an ambitious effort to analyse the role of images in human societies. At the beginning of your own essay in the catalogue you pose the question, "Why do images trigger so much passion?", and you characterize the aim of the show with a follow-up: "What we propose here in this show and in this catalogue is an archaeology of hatred and fanaticism". First of all, why this show? Can you elaborate upon your afterthoughts now, two years after the event? Did the show achieve what you originally expected, or hoped, it would achieve?

The simple answer is that I have been studying science practice for many years and no one has yet understood the obvious point that the more mediations there are the more objectivity you get. It's so obvious that I have never really understood the reaction of my contradictors who say: "You are a constructivist"! Well, you bet I am, yes, like all the scientists I have been studying. Not one of them would say: "Take away my grant money, my telescope, my colleagues, my instruments, my experiments so that I can access truth faster and without any artificial intermediaries"… So in their own accounting system, the number of mediations and the quality of their grasp of reality are in the same column, the credit column. Now what is in the other column, the debit column? Artefacts, that is, badly constructed elements which are just as artificial as the good facts but lead nowhere or only direct attention back to the original stand points.

Now the goal of *Iconoclash* was to say: How come that, since we in science practice (not in science theory, I grant you that) always link together the number of mediations and the power of truth, it remains so difficult to use the same trope, the same resource, for religion, for politics, for art. Why can't we say: "Yes of course, the more mediations the better" and that we feel forced to say: "Ah if only there was *no* mediation, how much better would be our access to truth, to God, to government, etc." In digging further and further into this small conundrum, I, of course, had to come

up against the question of fanaticism, or, fundamentalism: that is the opposite of constructivism. Where do those people come from who say: "The less mediation the better is our access to truth, to God, to objectivity, to beauty, to Government, etc"? Is it because of a religious idea about the danger of mediations? Or rather, is it because modernism has induced us into misunderstanding the exact lessons of religions, especially the various monotheisms, about the role of mediations?

Q: Clearly, one of the aims of the exhibition was to elaborate on the new concept 'iconoclash'. Could you please explain a bit why you think it is so important to keep your distance from the expression 'iconoclast'? And why, at the same time, instead of simply talking about something completely different, you want to retain the obvious reference to the earlier term?

Because I wanted to reinterrogate a long tradition of iconoclastic gestures in science, in art, in religion and in politics, but by *suspending* the gesture of destruction. That is, by transforming iconoclasm from a resource (the most often used by intellectuals by the way) into a topic. To suspend the gesture I had to plead with Peter Weibel, the co-curator who allowed me to assemble this amazing show: "Peter, please, you have made many iconoclastic shows, that's great, but now I want to make a show *about* iconoclasm…" He looked at me for about two minutes, speechless, and said "great, we will do it"… he thought that it was a great idea, probably, in his own mind, a great iconoclastic gesture! A sort of redoubling of the power of iconoclasm. But for me it was really a suspension: "What if we had been mistaken all along and if the task of the intellectual was to keep as far away as possible from iconoclasm?"

Q: In fact, here it is easy to be tempted to try to detect a more general attitude towards concepts, because you employ a similar strategy with the related concept 'factish' (instead of 'fetish')(2). On the whole, one feature that is omnipresent in your work is the creation of new concepts

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by Yrjö Haila & Turo-Kimmo Lehtonen

such as 'hybrids', 'translation', 'mediation', 'attachments', to name only a few. How important in the work of an 'empirical philosopher' or 'anthropologist' – you have characterized yourself with both of these terms – do you feel is the creation of new concepts? And what is their relation to the material at hand, like the works of art in this instance?

But this is Deleuze's definition of philosophy: the creation of concepts! I am a philosopher in that sense. But please note that apart from 'factish', which is awkward, all are perfectly normal English terms. Concepts yes, but no jargon here, at least I hope not. Iconoclash is a neologism yes, but we needed something strong and striking to sum up such an enormously complex show. In general I try to reuse normal terms and to make them the name of conceptual characters, to use another of Deleuze's expression.

I really don't think you can do philosophy nowadays without empirical methods. Some do it by believing naively in the final averaged-out results of a few chosen disciplines such as economics, the neurosciences, genetics, linguistics, I do it with field work, ethnographic methods, but my questions remains philosophical. Not because I believe philosophy to offer better foundations, mind you, but because I believe the humblest painting, the more mundane situations, any interview, requires, to be understood, that we are aware of the concept creations allowed only, in my view, by the philosophical traditions, especially the Continental one of course, namely metaphysics. The other main tradition, the analytic one, is a thought police and that is of no interest to me.

Q: Representation is a key political dimension of images and the use of images. This connection was left largely implicit in Iconoclash; on purpose, as you say in the catalogue essay. How do you understand representation? – in your book on politics (3) there is no room for the meaning of 'representation' that is prevalent in social sciences: as something picturing something else or being an image of it. Instead, representation has meant

the same activity as the work of 'porte-parole': acting as a substitute for something or someone else. What about representation within art? Do you need to retain the two meanings of representation in an art context?

This is the topic of the show I am curating now with Peter Weibel again, so it's hard to answer your question. Representation is a ubiquitous term, but I think there is some good use for the word if we try to think about techniques of representation, and that goes for politics, for science, for the market, for technology, as well as for art. For instance, voting systems are obviously a very important technique of representation in politics, but sampling is also important in statistics, and the creation of types in literature, etc. Parliaments are nice assemblies, but so is the web, so also are supermarkets with very complex equipment for making decisions. Can we render those procedures comparable? Not so as to fuse them, but simply to learn from their attention to details, to learn how difficult and fragile a representation is. I think there is a sense in which techniques of representation can be compared at the very humble level of practice, tricks, mediations, little devices. And then a second question can be raised: Why is it that in politics we keep using tools for representing, or a notion of direct representation, which are so primitive, so unsophisticated, so unmediated? We keep asking for an unmediated representation when on the contrary there exists everywhere powerful ways to re-present, that is to present anew, the sort of assembly, or collective we form. In the next show, Making Things Public, this is just what we are trying to re-present, this time with artistic means, namely the exhibit itself, but also by using many new media. Politics could benefit from a vast enlargement of our definition of what it is to represent. Or to say it in another way: Why are we so badly represented?

Q: This reminds us of another terse formulation in your essay in the Iconoclash catalogue: "What would happen if, when

saying that some image is human-made, you were increasing instead of decreasing its claim to truth?" – Iconoclash deals, as you say, with three different patterns of image making: religion, science and art. How do they compare with each other with respect to this aspect of the real?

My work has been criticized or accepted for a completely wrong reason: for me construction was positive and as I said in my first answer, parallel to objectivity and truth making. I was in that sense a good theologian and a good Catholic when I approached the question of science! In my tradition, the more institution there is, the longer the history, the better Faith is protected!! It took me a long time to understand that for most social sciences, construction was a synonym of fabrication, that is of lack of objectivity… Again this is the fanaticism of the iconoclasts. So the whole purpose of Iconoclash, to answer your question, was to use the confidence we have in scientific images – in spite, as I said of their long chains of mediations – to say: "Okay, well what if this was also the case for religious images, for politics, for art?" In visual art it's obvious, there are no greater producers of fabulous images than the iconoclasts of the last century. In religion, we had an amazing assemblage of images destroyed and worshipped to make the visitor understand that maybe the question is not: "Please let's do away with image and mediation altogether." What amuses me greatly is that this was a deeply Catholic show in the end!

Q: A particularly ambitious thesis in your essay in the Iconoclash *catalogue is the following: "Interference between the three [religion, science and art] should move us beyond the image wars." – How would this come about? Do you think the experience of the show lends support to this thesis?*

If we think that the present time is marked by a fight between fundamentalism and constructivism – as I have argued in this little pamphlet, *War of the World: What about Peace?* (4). I think it's clear that a new attitude of

respect toward mediators will end the image wars. Image wars are based in general on the wrong assumption: the choice is supposed to be between direct access and a 'stand in'. "We don't want stand ins, we want the real thing." Whereas the only question which is interesting, it seems to me, is: What are the good stand ins, and moreover, how are they linked to one another? What sort of flows, or circulations, do they allow?

We are no longer going to say: "Let's do away with image and we will know better, pray better, be better governed and see beauty face to face…", at least this part of fanaticism will be gone. We will learn to cherish the many complex intermediaries through which we learn to know, to pray, to govern etc. Also, we would be extremely sensitive to the *fragility* of the mediations. See, the problem with fanatics and iconoclasts is that if you destroy all the little intermediaries they say 'fine let's get rid of those nuisances anyway'. But if you know there is nothing else, then you have to be extremely careful about their quality, all the little details through which art, religion, science, politics are kept in existence. This is the great pragmatic lesson of people like John Dewey.

Q: We could then move on to broader issues, without forgetting the image wars… How did you come to get interested in art? In general, it seems that in your work you are currently moving into fields not traditionally connected with science and technology studies: recently you have published texts on politics, economics, jurisprudence and religion. Why these new areas of investigation, and how do they relate to your interest in arts?

My general project is to do the anthropology of the modern, as you know. If we have never been modern, as I have argued, what have we been? And especially important now: What will we become? To answer this question we have to reinterrogate our values, that is, what we hold to, but without imposing on them a modernist gloss. So I have to go to many different topics, but always with the same question: If

we have never been modern but are constructivist, what does the value of x look like – where x may stand for the many different treasures we cherish. For instance, if you ask again the question of religion – a terribly important question now because of the modernisation, that is, the fundamentalisation of Islam – it says: "Now that we have never been modern what it is that is so important in religion that, if we were deprived of it, we would disappear as a civilisation?" And then ask the same question of our various values: law of course, but also science, technology, politics, economics and so on. A vast program as you see, but simple in the sense that it's rather straightforward: If we have never been modern how would we present ourselves to the others civilisations who, by the way, are now much more numerous, much more powerful, and soon much richer than us, poor Europeans…? I don't share the hubris of modernism, but I don't share either the guilt of those who doubt European values. I think it's a question of representing oneself to the rest of the world in a more interesting and I would say polite way.

Q: 'Collective'(5) is a key term that you have adopted to characterize the insaparable mixing together of elements of nature and culture, usually held separate in social scientific writing. How would you analyze the similarities and differences in collectives that get created in, say, art vs. science, for instance? – How would jurisprudence or religion fit into this picture?

I don't think I can answer this question easily. Collective is a concept for getting rid of one difficulty, the nature/cultures or rather the one-nature/multi-cultures question. It can do this job pretty well, but it's not an all purpose concept; if it were it would run the risk of being a sort of alternative to 'society' or to 'nature'. If we want now to use again the differences between religion, science, art etc., we would have to recognize the ways they trace chains, or paths. For instance in Iconoclash one difference is fairly easy to follow between the chains of reference – more often seen in science – and the chains of representations so typical of religious images in the Christian tradition (before the Reformation at least). But law would produce very different chains as I have shown in the Fabrique du droit(6), and so would

politics (this is what we are trying to show in the next exhibition), and so of course would art. I believe that it's possible to differentiate between those activities not by spheres, or domains, or types of realities, but by their modes of circulation, their paths, so to speak. This is what I call my enquiry into the regimes of enunciation. But nothing of that search has been published so it would be very unfair to impose my terribly cryptic answers onto your readers…

Q: Since the book on microbes(7), you have made it clear that you are not at all attracted by 'criticism', especially when it is understood as a form of denouncement. Instead of critique, you are interested in creation, invention and the ways in which the collective can be collected together to form a whole made up of heterogeneous associations; in this your philosophy is strongly reminiscent of that of Gilles Deleuze or Michel Serres. This position opens up very interesting lines of thought. But first a background question: When saying so, are you not being critical of the gesture of critique? In the Iconoclash catalogue, it seems to us, you partly answer this question by saying that what is now needed is a "pause in the critique", and that now the task is "to make critique more difficult, to increase its cost". You even go as far as asking rhetorically whether the whole Iconoclash exhibition might be in danger of being seen as just another iconoclastic gesture. Do you think, in the end, that it is possible to do without critique in a way that does not reproduce the critical gesture while trying to discard the critical gesture?

Yes, I am well aware of the danger. As I said, it's probably the case that Peter Weibel thought it was the extreme example of iconoclasm, actually he says so in his final essay in the catalogue – which takes antipodal position to mine… But more seriously, no, of course I am all for developing a critical mind, and so on. I am not pleading for philistinism, complacency, laziness of thought, etc., but I think that because of the ways the social sciences have recently developed, critique has become, its true, fairly cheap. Provocatively, I say it's now the same thing almost as conspiracy theories… see I can be critical, even mean! So to answer your question we have to inherit from the great critical tradition, including Kant of course, but precisely, to inherit is to renew, not live off

the heritage! So let's find ways of rendering critique more costly; let's find a way to slow it down, to renew it's grasp, to make it precise, less automatic. For instance, if I take my work on law, of course there is a vast current of automatic critique which says 'behind law there is power and social forces looking for legitimation'. Fine, but if I ask: "Who has studied the ways in which judges themselves make the difference between packaging power relations and adding the subtle supplement of law"… I find almost no one. So this is an example: Critical scholars using the notion of legitimation have cheapened the task of critique so much that I prefer, when I do my study of the French High Court, to leave aside all claims to critique, to debunking, to revealing 'behind' the surface the 'real' power at work etc. Yes, to the point of risking conniving, this does not worry me at all… everything is so much deconstructed anyway, who would be pleased to add even more destruction to a field of ruins? I really think that constructivism is the opposite of deconstruction. Critique had two great centuries for itself. Okay, fine, it did a good job to loosen the grip of authority and institution, but it succeeded so much that everyone now swallows naively the cheapest conspiracy theory provided it looks like 'critique' now, let's see if we can generate again the institutions that are protecting the fragile mediations producing what we cherish as being good.

Q: In the Kantian tradition, instead of plain denouncement, 'critique' has meant the seeking of conditions of possibility. Couldn't one in fact understand the Iconoclash exhibition, for instance, as a case of trying to identify different tensions and uncertainties that have made possible the 'image wars' and iconoclasm as an attitude?

But conditions of possibility are just what I think has rendered so snug the social sciences… it's so easy now to look for conditions of possibility, yes but where are the specific objects, situations, sites? That's what interests me. "Comment c'est fait?" Foucault always said. So again turning to conditions of possibility was useful for sure, at some time, it was a way to summarize vast amounts of data, but now it's much too easy, especially if it's true that conditions are just that: conditions, not actualities. The search for critique in

that sense is a great way to substitute for precise fieldwork the automatic presence of social forces. Take the example of Hardt and Negri's Empire if you want an example of the emptiness of what critique has become, that's the best case: because they claim to look behind the appearances and reveal the hidden forces, they take away the critical attention, they add a world of beyond to the only real world of practices. Critique has become a literature of piety much like religion in the 19th century, a way to make people look away to the non-existing afterworld. And of course it's immensely popular, it looks radical, it looks critical, it remains entirely into the general, universal plane of conditions of possibility, in this case of capitalism…

Q: In a recent article in Critical Inquiry*(8), you advocate a move from 'matters of fact' to 'matters of concern'. If we try to trace similarities and differences between science and art, what would correspond to 'matters of fact' in arts? Would that be images taken in isolation – as opposed to the cascades of images that you write about in the catalogue text?*

I would not know how to answer this precisely. I have the feeling that a lot of recent art production has a sort of unsteady relation with science, shifting rapidly from hate to admiration to imitation to collage and kidnapping. But what is the art that is directly inspired by science studies, that is, which accepts a renewal of the definition of science – or the counter definition of artistic production – I am not sure? Certainly in the next show we are trying to assemble those we know who have tackled this issue head on: Natalie Jeremijenko is certainly one of them and, of course, those who are trying to make us the Phantom Body Politic, and the essential work for me of Adam Lowe from Factum in Madrid, and the many artists inspired by new cartographies of concern on the web, like the Bureau d'Etudes in Paris, Ben Rubin in New York. But really to answer your question one would have to find a specific way of forming chains of images in art – and to go much further than inter-textuality or inter-citations. It's a great topic, but I am not informed enough, although it's true I decided to become a curator, at the prodding of Hans Ulrich Obrist, precisely to see how art traces connections.

Q: Art has been moving closer to other spheres of life, such as politics and technology, ever since 20th-century high modernism started to drift toward eclipse – very early in the century, in fact. New aspects seem to have shown up recently, however: explicit, systematic, almost scientific commentary on societal issues – one need only think of the two last Documenta *shows in Kassel. The trend seems to indicate that there is in art, indeed, an increasing concern about what you call 'matters of concern'. How do you feel, does this really work out? What sort of role could art have in foregrounding critical matters of concern?*

Again, I am a disciple of John Dewey and his comment was that without all the arts, representation is impossible, and by this he meant the invention of a Public – which is the opposite of a society, or of the state for him. So this is exactly the task that we are proposing that artists play in *Making Things Public.* Without artistic representation, no political representation. But it's not that easy because so many artists live precisely in another century with a very negative idea of politics (they usually want to debunk it or play the "artiste engagé"), with a very modernist vision of science and technology, with a critical view of religion, with an even more critical reaction to the markets, so it might in fact be more difficult to expect artists rather than, say, architects, designers, politicians, or poets to feel the time. I am not sure at all that artists are somehow in the vanguard of the "spirit of the time". This seems to me a very modernist conceit. I think it's very difficult to be of one's own time, and that artists have even more difficulty than scientists to catch up with the epoch. At least, I don't think artists have any inborn advantage as if they were the pilot fish of social changes… no, I am afraid it takes an enormous effort to find the relevant media and the significant experiments to grasp what is happening now.

Q: Finally, we could move back to the comparison of patterns of images in religion, science and art. What roles could these different patterns play in foregrounding 'matters of concern'? In your essay in the Iconoclash *catalogue you refer to September 11, and in* Critical Inquiry *to climate change. These are, indeed, indications that there are real worries in store for humanity when the 21st century unfolds. How would you think the relations between religion, science and art could develop? "Division of labour" is a patently misleading metaphor – but what else is there?*

I am not sure I can tackle such a vast question. I will be more personal: I am a European. I want to inherit from the best tradition of this continent. I don't think modernism captures the recent history. I don't think we will modernize the whole planet. We thus have to change our own version of our own history. In this history iconoclasm and critical thinking have been linked so thoroughly that the two seem to go together. Maybe this is no longer the case now. This is what I say when I propose that Europeans *recall* modernity – in all the meanings of the word, that is as in 'remember', but also as you do when an industry recalls a defective product… Critique is much like the pharmakon of the Greeks that Derrida speaks about so eloquently: Poison or remedy, it depends on the dose. That's all that I can say: what if, in order to maintain critical thinking, we had to be very careful in abstaining from the poison of iconoclasm? +

(1) Bruno Latour & Peter Weibel (eds) 2002. *Iconoclash. Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion and Art.* Karlsruhe: Centre for Art and Media, and Cambridge, Ma.: MIT Press.
(2) 'Factishes' are types of action that do not fall into the comminatory choice between 'fact' and 'belief'. The neologism is a combination of facts and fetishes and makes it obvious that the two have an element of fabrication in common.
(3) *Politics of Nature. How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy.* Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2004.
(4) Prickly Paradigm Press, Chicago, 2002.
(5) The term 'collective' refers to associations of humans and nonhumans; it brings into focus the political process by which the cosmos is collected into one liveable whole.
(6) *La Fabrique du droit. Une ethnographie du Conseil d'Etat,* La Découverte: Paris, 2002.
(7) *The Pasteurization of France,* Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1988.
(8) "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern", *Critical Inquiry* 30 (Winter 2004): 225-248.

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Tere Vadén

Ownership of Information, Knowledge Creation and Free Software: The Digital Information Society and Postmodern Philosophy

The so-called information society is at a crossroads. On the one hand, there is an uncontrollable upsurge of innovation largely due to the anarchic hacker community, which is creating new information technologies and user cultures. On the other hand, there are the international media, software, and pharmaceutical companies, incessantly lobbying for the development and implementation of things like digital-rights management, intellectual-property legislation and means of technological control. As a result, information societies face an internal tension between the agenda of the mega-corporations and the richly diverse agendas of civil society, including the hackers and hactivists who often initiate groundbreaking technological developments. This tension is well portrayed in the declaration *Shaping Information Societies for Human Needs* issued by the civil-society delegates to the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva 2003:

We are conscious that information, knowledge and the means of communication are available on a magnitude that humankind has never dreamt of in the past; but we are also aware that exclusion from access to the means of communication, from information and from the skills that are needed to participate in the public sphere, is still a major constraint, especially in developing countries. At the same time information and knowledge are increasingly being transformed into private resource which can be controlled, sold and bought, as if they were simple commodities and not the founding elements of social organization and development. (”Shaping Information Societies for Human Needs.” http://www.geneva2003.org/wsis/documents/summit/WSIS-CS-Decl-08-12-03-en.pdf).

Because digital information can be reliably and cheaply copied, it offers great potential for democratisation and equality of information distribution. But digital technology also makes possible the monitoring, control and ownership of information in unprecedented ways. A whole new field of politics, the politics of knowledge and information, is emerging.

In the Northern hemisphere at least, digital code is increasingly becoming a commodity. This trend has many faces: intellectual property rights, information patents, patents on DNA and biological organisms, copyrights on immaterial assets and so on. The issue is political, because the notion of 'intellectual property' functions not only as a basis for a kind of information society, but also produces effects that widen the digital divides between owners and non-owners of information. Therefore it is essential to note that these concepts – 'code', 'property' – are historically and socially contingent. What kinds of information societies are to come depends in part on how these concepts are understood. We have to ask in a postmodern way what structures of power are embedded in particular types of technology, what productive effects (in the Foucaultian sense) they include, or, more bluntly, who or what groups of people benefit from a particular use or type of technology.

The interesting questions about digital information technology can be formulated when this kind of 'who'-analysis (analysis of the structures of power) is combined with the insight that technology is not just one thing. 'The same' kind of technology may one day benefit one group of people, the next day another group. So the questions become more concrete: What formations of power does a particular way of using technology support, need, presuppose or undermine? What are the forms of subjectivity or community included in a particular understanding of information technology? What kind of technology does a particular social regime support, and vice versa?

Knowledge Creation in Science and in the Free Software Community
Digital information technology provides the means for new types of sharing and distributing information as well as for new forms of intellectual property. This is the tension inherent in all the digital utopias. Just think of scientific knowledge, which gets its special status and credibility from the very fact that it is not owned: knowledge becomes scientific only through open and free critique by the scientific community. To quote Jacques Derrida: ”[…] in a scientific text […] the value of the utterance is separated, or cuts itself off, from the name of the author without essential risk, and, indeed, must be able to do so in order to lay claim to objectivity.” (2002, p. 47). This has been and still is largely the way in which scientific information and knowledge are severed from a concept of private property. The author, the one who 'signs' science, is the scientific community. A particular way of speaking, a particular type of speech act, that of scientific texts, creates a community and a way of appropriating knowledge that is different from the case of private property.

A similar device for co-operating without the intrusion of private property has been developed for computer software. So-called *free software* is built by a community that believes in the value of share-and-share-alike: the goal is to develop software that the user is free to use, modify and redistribute provided that the same freedoms are transferred. In this sense the ideal is close to the ideal of science. For this purpose the movement needs a legal and social tool, one that uses the copyright claim asserted on a piece of software for community building rather than for private-property building. This tool, developed by Richard M. Stallman of the Free Software Foundation is often colloquially called 'copyleft': the copyright statement in question gives the user the right to modify and redistribute the software provided that the right is also transferred (see Stallman 2002). The viral nature of this 'copyleft' copyright protects the information and knowledge amassed in the software from being shut in by ownership. The knowledge is appropriated so as to be within the common control of the community.

In both cases, science and free software, the goal and the prerequisite is a community of sharing based on a certain set of common values and practices. Both can be seen as ways of acting, as power structures, which are instrumental in creating a free and democratic information society. As such, the practices of these communities also demonstrate that digital information processing does not force us to accept the commodification of code.

Knowledge Creation and Ownership of Digital Code
One of the most interesting debates surrounding the ownership of information has centred around computer software, not least because software provides extreme examples of both the proprietary and non-proprietary forms of relating to code. On the one hand, we have the idea according to which pieces of computer software are identifiable works that are owned by their authors. Through this we get the proprietary system in which the owners of software (typically software companies) grant the user the right to use the software under certain conditions specified in end-user license agreements. On the other hand, there is the idea according to which computer software is algorithmic also in the sense that it cannot be owned: it is created in the interaction of a body of individuals and organisations and is signed in the sense of 'the author who discovered something' rather than in

Literature
J. Derrida. *Negotiations. Interventions and Interviews*. Edited, translated and with an introduction by Elizabeth Rottenberg. Stanford University Press, Stanford 2002.
S. Lash. *Critique of Information*. SAGE, London 2002.
R. Stallman. *Free Software, Free Society. Selected Essays of Richard M. Stallman*. Edited by Joshua Gay, The GNU Press, Boston 2002.

Laura Beloff and Erich Berger, *Spinne*, 2002, a networked audio-based installation. Photo by Laura Beloff.

the sense 'the author who owns something'. These extremes are exemplified, for instance, on the level of computer operating systems, where the dominant Microsoft Windows system is the purest example of a proprietary system, and the GNU/Linux system maybe the best-known example of a non-proprietary system.

The main economic argument for the ownership of software is that only an economic incentive for innovation can guarantee the prosperity of a society. The arguments for the freedom of software are similar to the arguments for the freedom of science: the speed of development, the trustworthiness of the software and the availability of code are all improved by the non-proprietary nature of software, and, at the same time, the values of co-operation and sharing are encouraged.

The question can be addressed from the point of view of knowledge work and production. Both the development of proprietary software in software companies and the development of free software in volunteer hacker organisations are certainly instances of knowledge-intensive work. But the contexts, including the underlying ethical, social and political beliefs, differ.

Software development in a big software company is organised and institutionalised, being more or less a Taylorist enterprise. The knowledge production happens in an organisation with its own structure, aims and functions. To use the definition by sociologist Scott Lash (2002), the functions of an organisation are structured through norms and the power legitimised by those norms. An organisation like this is hierarchical, with the concomitant channels of command and division of labour.

In contrast to this, the development of free software of the GNU/

Linux type happens in a widely distributed and non-institutional manner in a global volunteer community co-operating mainly through the Internet. Using Lash's terminology, the free-software community is a 'disorganisation' based not on norms and rules, but on shared values. Lash illustrates the difference between an organisation and a disorganisation using the difference between a church and a sect. The functioning of a church is typically based on a certain hierarchy, a set of norms and a legitimised use of power, whereas a sect is formed around a set of shared beliefs, convictions, or visions, often exemplified by a charismatic leader. The difference is crystallised in the operative force: in an organisation people are controlled by the use of legitimate power, whereas in a disorganisation people can only be controlled and persuaded through the use of (physical or non-physical) violence. A disorganisation is formed around a set of shared values, therefore the leader (the guru, in the case of Linux, Linus Torvalds) can control the disorganisation by saying what is right and what is wrong, what works and what doesn't, even though the leader does not have any legal power. Even if a disorganisation is non-institutional and informal, it is by no means chaotic. It can be much better 'organised' than an organisation because the appropriation of resources is not bound to the normativised compartments of an organisation. A sect, a movement, or a tribe can function in a very effective and rational manner. This is one of the elements of free-software development that continues to surprise: according to received economic theory, there is no real incentive for the volunteers to contribute.

Against this background the question of ownership of intellectu-

al property can be seen in greater detail. Software development in a company, in an organisation, can benefit from the fact that pieces of information and knowledge are seen as property. The ownership of code forms not only an economic motivation, but also provides a tool for the streamlining, rationalising and economising of the organisational structure, gives a measure for effectiveness, etc. Knowledge creation in organisations gains when code is appropriated along the lines of private property, when it is commodified and controlled through digital-rights management.

In contrast, knowledge creation in a disorganisation is at the very least disturbed and at worst destroyed if the code is the property of owners. In the GNU/Linux community, the developers take part of their own free will, they 'scratch their own itch', and the systematised sharing of information guarantees that their work contributes to a growing, common body of knowledge. The participants can contribute only in so far as the flow of information is not controlled by ownership. The underlying values forming the community include a belief in the freedom of information and a passion for improved information technology. A disorganisation is largely self-organising. The shared values are embedded in the functions of the disorganisation, and those functions are, at the same time, the goal of the disorganisation. Disorganisations work as ends in themselves, therefore they do not, in general, benefit from the introduction of external goals. The proprietarisation of information and knowledge is harmful to knowledge creation in disorganisations. Consequently, it may be that the most important innovations of the hacker community are social innovations: the distributed de-

velopment model; the 'copyleft' copyright; the idea of the Internet; etc.

It is crucial to recognise the existence of these two different types of knowledge work. A bias is produced by the fact that these two processes have different degrees of visibility. Organisational knowledge creation is also organised in the sense of having its own effective lobby, while disorganisational knowledge creation relies on more covert methods of social and political influence. This bias is all the more unfortunate if there is reason to believe that information societies are increasingly dependent on disorganisations. This is the economico-political side of an issue that cannot, however, be separated from the political one. A society where knowledge is asymmetrically divided and fragmented is less effective, less innovative and less equal and democratic than one in which knowledge is considered non-proprietary. +

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(1) Called Framework Decision of Data Retention, suggested by France, Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

(2) Shuddhabrata Sengupta from the Sarai Media Lab (Delhi, India) asked this question in his keynote speech at ISEA2004 in Helsinki, August 2004.

(3) http://www.postcolonialweb.org/india/hohenthal/5.2.html

(4) For more information on this "ethnocomputing" approach on computer systems, see e.g. Tedre (2002).

(5) Of "local" thinking, see Vadén and Hannula (2003).

Niklas Vainio
Whose Information Society?

The information society is supposed to liberate us from some of our daily restrictions of space and time. We are told that, with the help of "eDemocracy", "eLearning", "telepresence" and the like, we can participate, educate ourselves, work and socialise more efficiently, without being present. But looking at today's existing information society, what we see is increasing legislation to narrow down the rights of citizens and consumers for the benefit of multinational software, music and film companies. Information technology has made easy surveillance of citizens possible. Currently the EU is drafting a framework decision(1) to oblige Internet and telecommunications service providers store telephone and Internet traffic data about each and every citizen. And, at the same time, these digital tools and communication devices – called computers – on our desktops have become closed black boxes inside which we cannot see.

Who Owns the Tools?

Various citizen movements and organisations try to raise awareness of these problems. The Free Software movement, aiming to bring freedom to the domain of computer software, has been getting ever more attention over the last few years. The idea of the movement founded by the U.S. programmer Richard Stallman in the 1980s is that computer users are not free to use their computer as they wish, because software licenses restrict their right to use, copy and modify the program more than is morally acceptable. Free Software tries to challenge the prevailing way of seeing computer software as property.

The idea of scarcity of goods is a fundamental concept of economics. Because all resources are scarce, a system of trade has developed for distributing the goods in exchange for money. But digital information, such as software, is not scarce unless it is made scarce artificially by applying the copyright law. According to Richard Stallman, any restrictions on copying have no moral basis, because making copies of software costs basically nothing. Instead, these restrictions put us in difficult social situations, where we may not copy a program for a friend even if there are no technical obstacles to it. The free software movement is an attempt to get rid of this effect and to promote voluntary sharing and co-operation in the software domain (Stallman 2002).

The most famous outcome of the Free Software movement and its companion, the Open Source movement, is the operating system called GNU/Linux, produced co-operatively on the Internet by amateurs and professionals, either in their free time or getting paid by software companies. Other well known examples are the Mozilla browser, Open Office.org office package, and the MySQL database system. Network software like Apache, BIND and Sendmail currently form a remarkable portion of Internet infrastructure.

Two main ideas behind these (mostly overlapping) movements are *freedom* and *openness*. The first one means the freedom of the user to use, distribute and modify the software without any payment or additional licenses. An example of such modification is the possibility of tailoring the software for purposes that a commercial software company would not see profitable or otherwise would not implement. Second, the *openness* or *transparency* of the software means that the user can see how the software works, what it does and whether it does only what it is supposed to do. Or, in case of a problem, what caused the problem and how it could be fixed. Using proprietary (non-free), closed software is like driving a car which has its hood welded shut. Sure, the car can be used for driving, but if it breaks, the only way to have it fixed is to send it back to the manufacturer for repairs. In the case of free and open source software, any skilled repairperson can investigate and fix the problem.

Language of the Technology

Our computer culture was born in the U.S. Its roots lie in the military research and natural science of 1940–1960. The culture started to grow in 1970–1980 when home computers became available. Since the beginning, computers have been designed by and for middle-class educated persons, who until recently were almost all male and able to read English because it is the dominant language of computer applications, manuals and instructions.

Computer systems produced in the Anglo-American world are created from the Anglo-American point of view. They communicate to users in English, they use imagery (mailbox)

and metaphors (desktop and folders) based on the Anglo-American life-world, representing the world as it appears to an English speaker. They assume the user is able to read and write.

What would computers be like if they spoke Finnish instead?(2) Actually, some of them do – in a way. Microsoft Windows XP operating system has a user interface in 24 languages, including Finnish, Chinese, Hebrew and Hindi. The free and open equivalents, KDE and Gnome, have the user interface in about 80 languages (some of them only partially), mostly translated by volunteers. But even if the text is in Finnish, is the embedded thinking in the system Finnish?

Our existence is based on the language we speak. We think in the language, we exist in it. If the language divides the whole world into male and female , that is how we experience the world. If we always add "please" at the end of a sentence, the world is full of pleasing. Or perhaps on a rainy day we say "it is raining". What is raining? *It* is raining. But for somebody (a Finn, for instance), whose mother tongue is not English, "it" is not

raining, because his or her worldview does not have the concept of "it which rains". This is a matter of different ontology.

In India, about 52% of the population is considered literate (rural areas 45%, urban areas 73%). About 4% of the population knows English and 25% of the population lives in urban areas.(3) Western computer systems do not work for people who cannot read, do not understand English and have never used mailboxes and folders or other office accessories. Western computer systems use concepts that may not exist in other cultures or have different connotations or different ontologies. Or a computer may use a certain traffic sign to signal a problem, which may not be intuitive for a non-Westerner. If my computer does not quite fit within my mindset (my world view, my language, my ontology), it is foreign to me, in other words not really mine.(4)

Commercial software companies are unlikely to pay attention to local cultures and small languages unless there is money attached. Free and open source software provides a possibility for communities, be it a geographical community, a language

community or an ethnic group, to adapt the software to their own life-world, needs, thinking and environment. This could create a technology that is more "own" and more "local".(5)

Self-made Information Society
One example of the possibilities of free software is Simputer, a low-cost Indian hand-held computer based on GNU/Linux. The cheapest model of Simputer costs around $200, which means that only some of the Indian middle-class can buy it. However, because the Simputer stores all configuration settings on a Smartcard, a group of people can share one device and all have their personal Smartcards. The microbankers, who travel around the Indian countryside taking deposits from locals, use Simputer for accounting. When the banker enters the deposit into the Simputer, the computer says out loud the deposited sum in one of the major languages.

This is an example of local technology. Although the GNU/Linux system that the Simputer is based on was created mostly by Westerners, the freedom it carries within itself has made it possible for Indian companies

to build a local system on top of it. The Simputer was created to meet the needs of Indians and to fit local conditions – a sometimes moist and dusty environment, uncertain power sources and so on.

Other local systems could be created, perhaps for the illiterate or for the speakers of minority languages. Free software systems, localised or globalised, could provide a basis for a service-based information technology economy in developing countries. Or they could be a way to create a self-made, local information society, not dependant on the new colonisers of our time – the software and media industry. ✦

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Mikko Lehtonen

Flesh and Text

What kind of a space is a page? Like other pages, the one you are looking at at this very moment is obviously a more or less finished product. As such it is a surface hiding human efforts and social relations under its polished surface. As an outcome of a process it is, however, also a foothold on other processes. In its 'objective', material features are buried myriad meaningful social relations. One of them, but only one, is the voice talking to you in the visual form of a text – speech sounds translated into alphabets – and you trying to make sense of what that voice is saying.

At first glance it looks as if the text contains in itself all that is needed to produce meanings – just as the sun seems to orbit the earth, and not vice versa. The object-like nature of the text has often led researchers of texts astray – to look at the secret of a text from 'the text itself'. To be more precise, the secret has not been sought in texts as material but in texts as mental phenomena. The texts have been spiritualised and stripped of all their worldly qualities.

But we can always look at the page once more, this time as a worldly phenomenon. Under this earthly gaze the text might be seen not as a container of some closed meaning, but as a container of more or less open social relations. A text is at the same time a result of such human relations and an interface for possible new relations.

As texts are material and social things, their secrets lie not in themselves, but in the material and social nature of the human beings who produce and use them. We are flesh and we are spirit, and both of these constitutive human attributes are present in each and every text.

Body and Meaning

Flesh and text? Yes, indeed: Flesh and text. Human beings are not only brains and cognition, rather, our brains and cognition are always already embedded in our bodies. We are sensuous creatures, and so are the texts we circulate. We can touch

them, smell them (think of the enchanting odour of a freshly printed book or a magazine), listen to them, look at them. If our sensuous bodies were different, the texts would be different, too.

We humans are synaesthetic beings and bodies interacting with the material and symbolic world with all of our senses and the whole of our bodies. And yet we tend to reduce ourselves to minds when trying to make sense of what we do as we communicate with each other. The persistent mind-body dualism in Western thinking, with mind taking precedence over body, has directed attention away from the communicative potential of the human body and senses. It has also led to a disconnection of cognition and emotion in a most problematic way. Yet, it is our historically compounded body and our historically developed senses that constitute our possibilities for perception and interaction.

Anthropologist Ruth Finnegan writes in her book *Communicating* (Routledge 2002, p. 6):

Human creatures call on a vast array of resources for interconnecting […] We use gestures, sounds, writing, images, material objects, bodily contacts, supported by the more or less agreed conventions through which we variously recognise such usages as purposive forms of interaction and mutual influence. Through activating our voices, touches and movements we can share wishes or emotions with others; make visible movements of our bodies to encounter or avoid each other in public places; utilise pictorial displays, visually codified graphics, and three-dimensional artefacts to interconnect over space and time. Deploying these communicative resources is fundamental to our human existence.

Indeed we do draw on manifold resources when circulating meanings. We communicate not only with our bodies, but also via different human-made media, such as clothing, sculptures and computer screens. Our rela-

tions with nature, with human-made artefacts, with other human beings and with ourselves are bodily and sensuous relations. A body and senses are not merely a given biological frame, but social, historical and cultural phenomena. There are, of course, certain 'biological' features that are essential to our body and senses – such as that we stand and move on two legs, have a nearly vertical face and do not have to use our hands for locomotion, but can employ them for a large variety of purposes.

All this is a part of our specificity, as also are our senses. The human senses are indeed specific, particular, not universal. Our senses do not display material reality 'as it is'. On the contrary, material reality is always constructed for us in a sensuously mediated, and therefore particular way. We do not, for instance, see infrared radiation. Butterflies, however, are said to be able to sense this. Or, to take another example, we hear and smell only a fraction of what dogs are able to hear and smell.

Hence, reality is always displayed to us in a specific way determined by our sensuous capacities. And hence our sensuous experience of the world is never universal, but always particular, determined by our particular bodily and sensuous capabilities, which are specific to us as natural and cultural beings. In other words, we do not see, hear, smell etc. all there is, not even in synaesthetic perception, but only certain parts of the world.

Yet the precedence given to the mind in the body-mind dualism has led us to neglect the bodily and sensuous particularity of our experience. This stress on mind over body has furthermore been linked with the significant fact that the modern world has been a predominantly ocularcentric one. We have been giving priority to the mind and the eye over the body.

The particular nature of our senses is constitutive to the particular nature of our textual environment. The fact that auditive and visual communication are in a dominant posi-

tion in our mediated culture is linked to our bodily capacities for creating and circulating external forms of communication. Taste and smell require that the substance we sense enters our body. With the sense of touch we meet the requirement that the object being sensed is in tactile relation to our body. All these senses require, then, the material presence of the substance sensed. Hence, they do not form a basis for the kind of communication in which symbols are communicated in external forms to large audiences. On the other hand, hearing and seeing, in which acoustic and light waves are sensed, do not necessarily require the physical presence of the source of the sensing, but can be mediated from one place to another. Hence taste, smell and touch are linked to what is relatively near us, whereas hearing and seeing do not in the same sense require a similar co-existence with the original source of sensing.

Multimodality

When communicating, we draw simultaneously on several resources that can be called 'modalities'. Throughout history, language has, indeed, existed as just one mode in the totality of modes involved in the production of meanings. A spoken text is not just verbal, but also visual, and combines with 'non-verbal' modes of communication such as facial expressions, gestures, postures and other forms of self-representation. A written text, similarly, involves more than language: it is written on something, on some material, and it is written with something. Pictures, too, are drawn or otherwise made on some material with some materials.

Now, if the fundamental symbolic forms – speech and other sounds, writing and pictures – are always already multimodal, if, in other words, they draw on numerous resources, then multimodality inevitably also covers the more complex symbolic forms that are developed on the basis of these three. Hence we could say that *multi-*

Hanna Haaslahti, *White Square*, 2002, interactive installation. Photo by Petri Virtanen/Central Art Archives. © Finnish National Gallery.

modality characterises all symbolic forms utilized by humans.

Multimodality does not stop at the level of individual texts. All human societies use a variety of modes of representation. Cultures are never constructed by relying solely on one form of representation. Even oral societies have symbolic forms other than speech at their disposal. Each of these modes (speech, pictures, music, writing etc.) have different representational potentials, different potentials for meaning-making. We can, for instance, say or write that the popularity of President Bush has increased or decreased, but it would be immensely difficult to communicate the same in music (even though it might be done with music and images, showing poll results with President Bush's happy or sad face and playing jubilant or melancholic tunes). Furthermore, each mode of representation has a specific social valuation in particular social contexts. These different modes of representation are not autonomous communicational resources in a culture, nor are they deployed separately, either in representation or in communication; rather, they intermesh and interact at all times.

Each mode of representation has its potentials and limitations. These potentials of different modes of representation can be called 'affordances', that is, that what a certain mode can and cannot do. This is also connected to the fact that some things are more easily communicated in one mode than another. For instance, speech is a mode of time and sequence, whereas images most often include elements that exist in space simultaneously. In verbal language there is compact syntax, but open lexis, whereas in visual language the syntax is quite open, but the lexis is compact. Hence, when we translate from one mode to another (make a film or a ballet from a novel, for example) we have to add something that was not there, but also take something away from what the first mode included, but which cannot be represented in another mode.

From Page to Screen

As a concept multimodality is relatively new. The changes that have taken place in late modern culture have only recently made us more receptive to this area. These cultural changes are perhaps most clearly seen in the way that the printed word is no longer the self-evident sovereign of the media landscape. The visualisation or pictorialisation of culture, the increasing production of multimodal texts, as well as the increase in intermedial relations between different forms of media all contribute to the formation of a new landscape. Perhaps the best way to depict this change is to say we are witnessing a transition from the page to the screen as the dominant form of our culture.

Multimodality calls into question the modern notions of the identities of texts and media forms. For a long time, it was the custom to see texts and different media forms as autonomous and complete in their own terms. The concept of multimodality, however, stresses the heteronomous nature of texts and media forms, their dependence on stuff that is not derived from their 'proper' area.

All in all, we are in a need of a different logic for looking at media forms as a whole. We need to replace the current stress on differences and lack of connections by a careful consideration of both differences and similarities, both the autonomies and togetherness of different media forms. This does not, however, mean that multimodality will totally replace identity with difference, that it will want to get rid of any and all identities of different media forms. It means rather asking how the identities of different texts and media forms are built out of and on differences.

Now, let's start again: What kind of a space is a page? +

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Kirsi Peltomäki

Common Good, Personal Pleasure

Innovations mold social space: they make certain practices of socialization, identification, and consumption possible, while they limit the existence of others. In that sense, innovations concern both the common good and personal pleasure. As a representational category, 'innovation' is typically linked to one of two systems, the first of which involves narratives of utopia, while the second concerns utility. In the utopian mode, innovation promises to bring about transformations regarding personal pleasure: it promises that the limits of experience in everyday life will be expanded. In the typical utopia, the scope of everyday life will be advanced by the potential created by whatever innovative product, mode of thinking, or social structure is in question.

If utopian innovation projects an image of a life that is different and better, representations of innovation based on utility predominantly rely on the common good, setting forth a picture of everyday life as the same – but still better. The utility mode promises the user of an innovation increased psychic and physical security within the practices of life that are already in place by improving upon them: SMS messaging uses a series of abbreviations to replace lengthier phone conversations. Everyday life becomes streamlined without any sense of personal sacrifice.

Although the concepts of 'utopia' and 'utility' accommodate wildly diverse meanings, they both imply an upcoming change in the practices of living. Indeed, the wish to transform the fundamental building blocks of life, such as social structures, labor practices, or even the laws of nature, has been one of the driving motives for ushering forth utopias. In contemporary art, this transformation sometimes follows the models set by classic historical utopias, imagin-

ing a better-organized society for the common good. One need only recall projects such as *Utopia Station*, curated by Molly Nesbit, Hans Ulrich Obrist, and Rirkrit Tiravanija for the 2003 Venice Biennale and Haus der Kunst in Munich in 2004, or *The Land* (1998-), a project in Thailand, for which artists, including Tiravanija and Superflex, became engaged in the process of designing 'total' social and physical facilities for ideal living.

Projects such as *Utopia Station* and *The Land* emphasize a resurgent interest in (or obsession with) utopian thinking within the field of contemporary art. While 'innovation' is employed in mainstream R&D with limitless optimism, the entire concept of *innovative practices* was long deemed hypocritical by post-modernist artists and critics. Associated with originality, innovation was critically relegated to the realm of modernist myth. Yet, the current interest in innovation – whether it is utopian or utilitarian in focus – cannot be reduced to a haunting (or reapparition) of modernism alone – because innovation in art no longer primarily refers to the expressive practices of *the artist*, but to ideas, environments, and practices geared at specified audiences or *users*.

Although utopia and utility often remain separate entities in corporate and public representations of innovation, they are frequently intertwined in the field of contemporary art. A truly utilitarian task – the prevention of suicide – was visually addressed by the Bureau of Inverse Technology in *Suicide Box* (1996), a work that digitally counted the number of suicides committed by people jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.(1) Initiated in response to the City of San Francisco cutting funding for the maintenance of the safety nets that had prevented jumpers from the bridge actually reaching the

water, this accounting was carried out by means of a sensor that registered specific types of movement that otherwise went unobserved by passersby and authorities alike.

Suicide Box's hard-core utilitarian approach imaged forth social (yet invisible) space, under the guise of 'measuring' it. According to the Bureau of Inverse Technology's Natalie Jeremijenko, "technologies are tangible social relations… [and] technologies can therefore be used to make social relations tangible".(2) This tangibility made *Suicide Box* utopian in its very positivism: registered signals of vertical movements are, after all, rather removed as signs of loss of life. In *Suicide Box*, technologies of data collection are used to transform our organization of life (and here, death) in order to extend the realm of possibilities (the reach of the social sphere) by representing it, or making it *visible* to a projected audience.

Marjetica Potrc's works also extol the common good in their deployment of utility. In the *Hippo Water Roller* (2002), Potrc provides a solution to the problem of carrying a sufficient amount of water at one go from a village well. Yet, the utility of the *Hippo Water Roller* is enveloped in a transformative, utopian discourse. It is an *innovative* water-carrier that incorporates a barrel designed for rolling along the ground, rather than something that is carried by its user. The sheer utility of Potrc's solution is so considerable, in fact, that it begs the question of why the project is presented within the context of art as opposed to base commercialization and manufacturing. Could it be that the contemporary art environment lends to the *Hippo Water Roller* the utopian aura that the artist – and the work's viewers – need?

Historical utopias leave a slim margin of living for their inhabitants, or subjects. While utopias are osten-

sibly constructed in order to provide ideal conditions for human subjects, well-known utopias, such as Thomas More's archetypal *Utopia*, offer little room for subjects who diverge from the prefigured wants and needs of their author. Instead, their social structures are based on ideals of justice and order that require predictable behavior. More than being merely anonymous, as Fredric Jameson characterizes the subjects in More's *Utopia*,(3) subjects of common utopias *lack autonomy*. Yet autonomy is projected onto a vision of the common good, or the social structure as a whole. Life will be free of despair and oppression because the members of the social structure know their *place*. Such predetermined conformity is one reason why utopias are sometimes criticized as totalitarian: the individual subject of utopia merely becomes an extension of the god-like vision of the author.

Even so, some types of utopian transformation skillfully bypass the demand for the common good, while still calling attention to the 'inhabitants', the subjects that are projected into utopia. One such project that evinces this is Pipilotti Rist's two-screen video installation *Ever Is Over All* (1997). Rist's installation juxtaposes a video image of a lush, flower-filled garden with an orderly street scene. On the street, a radiant young woman in a sky-blue dress dances along the sidewalk towards the camera, pausing to bash car windows to bits

with a giant – and deadly – flower/sledgehammer as she passes them by. The title, *Ever Is Over All,* alludes to an imagined utopian future, while Rist's dreamy imagery construes utopia as a permissive space of ultimate absolution. The woman's giddy jubilance in smashing the car windows belies an autonomy that is based on a sense of limitless possibility: *a transformation of the rules of social conduct.* Yet both the transformation and the resulting autonomy are demonstrated through the behavior of an *individual subject.* Common good has become individual pleasure.

The division between common good and individual benefit also characterizes Andrea Zittel's works from her A-Z series. The *A-Z Living Units* (1993-94) promise to organize their user's daily life by minimizing the elements necessary, thereby maximizing efficiency. Zittel's *Living Units* are composed of modular structures that organize private space for the purposes of living, working, sleeping, and entertaining. A better (or the best possible) life is definitely a practical concern. These complete systems for imaginary modes of living are built for an individual whose needs, in the case of the customized units, Zittel has mapped out beforehand. Ideally, the user then models his or her life around the artist-provided utilitarian environment.

The tension between asserted uniqueness and compulsive efficiency in Zittel's *Living Units* raises poignant

questions about the complex social dynamic between individuality and standardization. If one structure fulfills all of its user's needs for living, will their world expand or shrink? Zygmunt Bauman argues that geographical utopias have become impossible to fathom, now that the world has been fully mapped out.(4) If the user's needs are standardized by assuming infinite repeatability (every day consisting of the same actions, for example), will life actually be more enjoyable, or just easier to deal with?(5)

In the contemporary art that I here call 'utopian', autonomy remains central, but it shifts from the social structure to the individual. The seductiveness of Zittel's works relies on the promise of transformation for the subject. Likewise, *Ever Is Over All* is organized around a forceful subject, the triumphant female figure whose resultant autonomy manifests as unfettered freedom of conduct. The *Hippo Water Roller*'s user, on the other hand, gains control of the necessities of life.

In the recent history of art, the supreme autonomous subject at the center of a work of art has typically been the artist. Although the modernist myth of the creative genius has in many ways been questioned by art historians and critics (as well as by artists themselves), as viewers, we still tend to focus on the psychic and physical reality of the artist. For example, artistic practices such as those grouped under site specificity and 'services', as articu-

lated by Andrea Fraser, Fred Wilson, and others, depend upon the artist as a central figure, because the cultural agency of the artist remains necessary for the planning and execution of the work. The artist remains a pivotal figure also in relation to constituencies and viewers.(6)

In Zittel's and Potrč's practices, the artist is superceded by *the user* as the central subject of the work. In an oft-repeated anecdote, a request by a friend to redesign his life was the inspiration for Zittel to initiate the A-Z works. In the *Hippo Water Roller,* an everyday innovation is placed in the hands of real-life users – whose daily reality, it is asserted, the innovation transforms. Potrč-the-artist functions as a *service-provider,* yet the figure of the *artist* is no longer the central subject whose vision *visibly* organizes the work.

Utopian autonomy thus becomes the attribute of a subject rather than a place, and the subject is one who integrates innovations into the present social sphere, configured (through the innovation and by the user) as a coherent whole. Potrč's and Zittel's works rely on (and offer) a potential for utopian conduct. Practices of living thereby replace the classic utopian themes of presenting reorganized systems of social relations that are to take place at some ambiguous time in the future. Zittel's works, in particular, embrace self-regulation at the expense of social, or intersubjective, relations,

(1) Http://bureauit.org/sbox/
(2) Http://tech90s.walkerart.org/nj/ (Under *Transcript*)
(3) Fredric Jameson, "The Politics of Utopia", *New Left Review* 25 (January/February) 2004, 39.
(4) Zygmunt Bauman, "Utopia with no Topos", *History of the Human Sciences* 16:1 (2003), 22.
(5) Zittel admits that the *Living Units* did not succeed in their original goal of simplifying life: the reduction of choice structured into the units failed to maintain the user's interest in the long term. See www.zittel.org (the section *A-Z Living Units*, under *A-Z 1993 Living Units*).
(6) Miwon Kwon argues that the figure of the artist in both the dematerialized art practices of the 1960s and the recent 'discursive' forms of site specificity paradoxically becomes centralized rather than dispersed. See Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 38-52.

by constructing the user as a complete subject, autonomous and whole. In this sense, the utopias of contemporary art differ from the classic utopias and modernist utopias of art. Unlike classic utopias, they place autonomy upon an individual, not upon the social structure. Unlike modernist utopian art, these works move the notion of autonomy from the artist and their work to the viewer or participant. By allowing their viewers to identify with, or claim, autonomy, these works project an aura of private pleasure that fits uneasily with the project of envisioning common good. Yet it would be hard to ignore the power of identification that is unleashed in the works of Zittel, Potrč, and Rist for the viewer. Autonomy, after all, lies at the heart of all utopian thinking. +

Pipilotti Rist, *Ever Is Over All*, 1997, audio/video installation (installation view, computer simulation) and two video stills. Courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth, Zürich /London.

Focus: Media Art
Edited in Collaboration with Perttu Rastas

Focus is directed at unveiling some of the major issues related to media art - its concept, history and current practices - by a number of Finnish cultural actors, scholars and specialists like Erkki Huhtamo, Erkki Kurenniemi, Mauri Kaipiainen, and Juha Huuskonen.

In addition to Erkki Kurenniemi's self critical analysis of his own development as a visionary innovator in various fields of art, science and music, the researchers Riikka Matala and Minna Tarkka bring a special focus to bear on the work of Laura Beloff and Heidi Tikka.

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"Due to technical problems the work is not on view", a temporary label at Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki. Photo by Perttu Rastas.

Perttu Rastas Art is Fast-forward Evolution
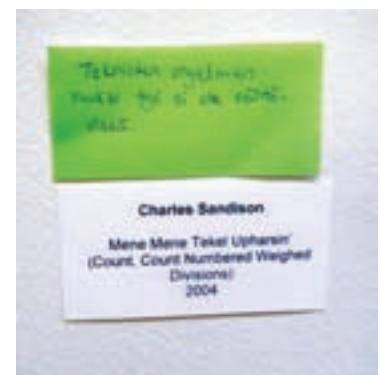
In his book *Picasso* (1) John Berger writes how, in his opinion, the cubists discovered the theory of relativity before Einstein. Art produces social innovations spontaneously, it continuously transforms nature into that second nature we call 'culture'.(2) Arts and cultures develop, are born and die quickly compared to good old nature. Art is fast-forward evolution.

The Korean Fluxus artist Nam June Paik, who has also been called the pioneer-father of media art, wrote in 1974 for the Rockefeller Foundation a short text where he envisioned the society of the future by calling one part of it the electronic highway – far ahead of the hype of the 1990s. In contemporary conceptualese the text might be read as a basic sermon by an artist and techno-zealot high on electronic noise, unless one confesses oracularly that this is the very direction in which Western capitalism has been pushing the information society. Paik was by no means alone with his idea, many cultural researchers dreamt the same dream. But where, in 1974, were the corporations for whom forecasting is the most important mode of business thinking? What was Nokia doing in 1974? If we sink to the level of thinking that corporations and their production planning are the only relevant thing for our future, we have already lost the future for today. That is why we need artists, for it is they who do the basic research on creativity that is the very foundation on which the relevant interpretation and future prospects of entire epochs rest. Jung once said that only artists and madmen dive, the rest of us merely float.

We need identities that go their own way regardless of norms, moral codes and any sets of ten commandments that hold society together. Artists are social innovators, who stretch out the growth of us humans and its limits.

That is why following, supporting, cherishing, exhibiting and depositing into our cultural memory the work of artists, that diving game of those 'free' adults, is tantamount to supporting relevant creativity on behalf of us all.

Looking for the Space of Media

The work of artists increasingly consists of moulding time and space. Objects remain a central format for artists, but the context of the works is a social encounter, introduced into time and space, with feeling human beings, an encounter that always entails reciprocal interaction.

Museums, galleries, public spaces have all become media spaces. Department stores and shops are no longer sheltered rooms to keep and display products, just as exhibitions are no longer merely spaces for hanging works on walls. They are arenas of the eye (or sequences of looking), entire exhibition mediums, total installations that have both their own story and their own media concept. Curating ("We will all become curators," says Brian Eno) and display have become an independent sector as a production factor in art. Curators (and museum directors, festival directors) have become small giants almost on a par with artists (the view is part of the same development as in films, where the predominance of top producers – often former script writers – over directors and actors is growing).

Major exhibitions today are media events and brands, advertised with full-page announcements and television spots. Exhibitions themselves have become part of art. It is said that works of art are made only for the exhibition context – increasingly as commissioned pieces, as sub-productions. Museums do not just monitor and archive the art market, they are an integral part of it.

In his book *Projects for Prada*,(3) the famous Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas writes about his Prada shop concept: "Museums are popular, not for their content, but for their lack of content: you go, you look, you leave. No decisions, no pressure." Regarding the concepts of smooth and rough, he remarks "commercial is smooth, art is rough, common is smooth, unique is rough."

I think Kai Kalin, the Finnish expert on contemporary culture, gave very apt description in an interior design magazine a couple of years ago, not of the difference but of the respective emphases of design and art: "Art cannot be designed. A designed product does not have to be made artistic. To be real, design must become objects. To be true, art must become conceptual. Design is always a result, a consequence, art is always a starting point."

These days museums talk about clients, events are created from a marketing angle, audiences are competed for, all of which creates a need to make art and artists a species of product, brands that are packaged and sold.

(1) John Berger, *The Success and Failure of Picasso*, Random House, 1989, ISBN 0679737251.
(2) Why is it that everything that was so naturally called art and culture should now be called 'content production'? Because even an engineer could then understand it?

(3) Rem Kolhaas, *Projects for Prada, part 1*, Fondazione Prada Edizioni, ISBN 88-87029-18-0.
(4) Brian Eno, *A Big Theory of Culture*, EDGE, April 1997.

Juha van Ingen, *(Dis)integrator*, 1992, video, 3´55.

The wood sculptures of the contemporary artist Pasi Karjula can be eyed on the walls of the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, as well as at a housing fair in a Zen-ish "house installation" reminiscent of pictures in the interior decoration magazine *Gloria*. The sculptures create an "ethnic atmosphere" in the timber-frame house, states the brochure.

This is one way of describing progress and to take it seriously. Be that as it may, it is increasingly clear that the exhibition context itself has become a form of comprehensive project planning and a kind of fair where professionalism with a keen eye for the limitations and possibilities of space and structures gain ever more new areas and criteria.

The contexts of art are spatial media, kind of like laboratories of hierarchies involving publicity and modern cultural civic society where visitors are trained to try out their senses and experiment with different social fields. Through special exhibitions, technological experiments in new media become part of the art world, and thereby spread ever further to society at large.

Rem Koolhaas writes: "Prada is an introduction of non-commercial typologies. Cultural events could be hosted in stores. Activities other than shopping could take place after store hours". Competition escalates.

The practices of creativity in art

Despite all the talk, art comes about as the result of very practical operations.

Although defining art is, in the phrase of a Finnish artist, "ornithology for the birds," it does give an idea of why man is an explaining animal. All art is of its own medium, a distillate of its own social ethos. The contemporary cultural media time, which Brian Eno calls "non-functional stylistic behaviour,"(4) grows continuously in our dense time perspective. It does not develop in leisure, integrating itself instead with work, becoming part of our lifestyle committed to urban culture and late-modernism.

The creativity of art is largely based on an aesthetic of endless circulation and an endless search for new possibilities. Juha van Ingen's brilliant video work *(Dis)Integrator* encapsulates this in the words of the inquisitive, yet anxious woman, "but this is different." We do not always know instantly, which aspect of art is really new and which is part of the normal circulation of cultural economy (I will give you a statistical formula: 75% is recycled, or in rougher terms, "okay (rubbish)", 15% is interesting, with genuine links to our cultural heritage, 10% is something we simply do not understand, too radical, too apposite, which we relegate to be the object of our indignation. We are always myopic with respect to our own age (cultural meme). But the basic message of art is the insight: aah! so you can see (and think) it that way, too!

Media art in particular is based on monitoring, in practical contexts, the cultural effects of research and applications of media technology. Media art in my opinion is different from the other arts precisely because it is marked by fluid boundaries and a basic attitude of communicative sociology, where many works are in a continuous evolving state of "work in progress" and ready to react, to rebuild itself as the social environment evolves. The use of new, continuously developing technologies and applications around the fringes of science and art is a built-in aspect in media art. It builds 'social laboratories' and investigates the 'weak signals' familiar from futures studies and creates 'systems of advance warning'. +

Erkki Kurenniemi
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'Oh, Human Fart'

"Man is a machine. A machine produced by evolution. I find it impossible to think that for mere nostalgic reasons, such a slime-based system would be preserved..."

– Erkki Kurenniemi

Erkki Kurenniemi (b. 1941), one of the great unsung pioneers of electronic art, is known in Finland as a versatile participant in many multidisciplinary projects – as a nuclear scientist, an inventor, and an artist – from the early sixties until today. In public, he has appeared on topical TV shows and written futuristic articles speculating about the future of mankind and the relationship of man and machine. He has been considered a prophet of artificial intelligence research, headband

videos, artificial reality, you name it – often 10 to 40 years ahead of his time.

He is best known as the designer of a range of unique digital instruments in the University of Helsinki, Department of Musicology during the sixties. He subsequently had an impressive career as a pioneer of industrial automation at Rosenlew in the seventies, as an automation designer in Nokia's cable division in the early eighties, and as head of exhibition planning at the Heureka Science Center in Vantaa from 1987 to 1999.

Framework invited Erkki Kurenniemi to write a sketch about his exploratory search for new types of user interfaces, and a short history of technical innovations from the early sixties to speculations about the future: what is it all actually leading to?

This article is a short premature self-obituary, relating some of my activities with things happening in the world of technology, decade by decade.

Fifties: Electronic Music and the Electronic Computer
I was five when the ENIAC electronic computer was started. During the fifties, as a schoolboy, I read about computers and electronic music. Max Mathews used the computer to generate music. With my father, I visited the Bull computer factory in France, and I was sold.

Sixties: Analog vs. Digital
I started studying mathematics and theoretical physics and got my first job at the Institute of Nuclear Physics, programming an analog computer. Soon came the first digital computer, the Swedish-made Wegematic 1000, with vacuum tubes, a drum memory, and a thirst for kilowatts of power. At the same time, I had an unpaid job at the Institute of Musicology, developing their electronic music studio.

I read about the Buchla and Moog voltage-controlled synthesizers and started developing my own circuits, determined to learn the spiritual life of transistors and operational amplifiers. Voltage-controlled circuits are just specialized analog computing modules, and patch-cord patching is the natural way to program them, a technology borrowed from the old manual telephone exchanges and Hollerith punched card machines.

I began developing an integrated analog/digital music studio with combined voltage and digital control. Digital signals were used as triggers or gate signals, and also as square-wave sound. The final musical pieces were still edited the traditional way, by cut-

ting and splicing analog full-track audio tape.

As integrated circuits became available in the mid-sixties, it was only natural to use them for memory and processing in sequencers and other musical instruments, but the main thing, a computer, was still unreachable to ordinary individuals.

I tried several "architectures" for pre-computer music instruments. At the 1968 conference on computer music in Florence, Italy, I read a paper entitled "The Music Terminal," presenting the idea of a graphic terminal, with local A/D–D/A converters for a sampled sound interface, but still connected to a central mainframe.

Seventies: Computer and Chip
The first instrument in the Dimi series, the Dimi-A (for: Digital Music Instrument with Associative Memory) was constructed in 1970. It was a 2-channel non-processor digital sound synthesizer, with a serial MOS shift register memory of 100 16-bit words, built from about 200 TTL MSI[1] circuits. Analog circuitry was only used for two 8-octave band-pass binary-selectable output filter banks, giving 127 timbral qualities for both channels.

The idea of an associative computer memory was attractive (alternatively known as a CAM, Content Addressable Memory). Most probably I got the idea from Teuvo Kohonen, the leading Finnish theorist in self-organization and neural computing. In the Dimi-A, all of its 16 bits circulated at high speed in their CCD or "bucket brigade" shift registers. Half of the 8 bits determined the time code for the instruction. Of the remaining bits, 4 determined the parameter, and 4 determined the value for that parameter. For example, a 4-tuple of 4-

Left: Erkki Kurenniemi with DIMI-0, September 22, 1971. Film still from *The Future Is Not What It Used To Be* by Mika Taanila, 2002.

Right: Erkki Kurenniemi, Dimi-ballet, tv-performance with DIMI-O, 1971.

bit memory word nibbles (*a*, *b*, *c*, *d*) might mean: at bar *a*, at its beat *b*, set *c* (e.g. the pitch (mod 12)) to value *d* (e.g. #F).

This meant that to use the Dimi-A was to write machine code. That didn't turn out to be such a good idea.

The *Dimi-A* was followed by a series of Dimi instruments:

The *Dimi-O* was an electronic organ (with 1536 bits of MOS memory for 32 polyphonic steps) controlled by a video camera plus 1-bit video digitizer input and a 4-octave polyphonic keyboard.

The *Dimi-S* or "sexophone" was another user interface experiment. Four players, connected to the instrument by wires, touched each other and generated up to 6-voice parallel sequences, by repeatedly tapping each other's bare skin.

The *Dimi-T* or "electroencephalophone" was not really digital. Two clips at earlobes registered one component of the brain's electrical activity. The signal was amplified about a millionfold and filtered to eliminate all but the delta-alpha range of EEG. With some more processing the signal was used to modify the pitch of a voltage-controlled oscillator.

The last and the most unsuccessful Dimi instrument was the *Dimi-6000*. Intel had introduced the first fantastic "computer on a chip" or "microcomputer", and we obtained the first unit in 1972. The microcomputer-controlled synthesizer consisted of two subsystems: (1) the processor cards CPU, ROM, RAM, RS232 (for the display terminal), FSK modem (for C-cassette data storage), 8-bit control voltage DAC; and (2) the audio cards: VCO cards, VCF cards, analog multipliers for modulators, FET crosspoint switching matrices, etc.(2)

Digelius Electronics, the company founded to manufacture and market digital instruments, crashed, and I moved to industrial robotics. Jukka Ruohomäki, a Finnish pioneer of electronic music, wrote a sophisticated piece of software called DISMAL for the Dimi-6000. It was in effect a music assembly language. But then the world was not interested in code twiddling. It wanted to twiddle knobs instead and pound keyboards.

Eighties: Personal Computers

I bought my first Apple II computer in 1980, with a stupendous 32 kilobytes of memory. The built-in BASIC language was good for writing 'epic algorithmic art': simple sounds, graphics animation, and textual game-like interaction. Later came the Forth language, which allowed 'lyrical algorithmics', compact programs whose structure was more beautiful than their output.

The Midi interface arrived and changed the way music was made. The Midi interface (a local area network) and the Midi file standard introduced a new way to encode music, not as sound or as written notation, but as a real-time record of performer actions and gestures. The capacity of home computers was not yet sufficient for sampled sound.

I also considered Midi a tragedy for music. It bound us to an equal-tempered pitch scale for more than two decades. The computer would have been the first truly scale-independent musical instrument, but that chance was lost by bad formulation of the Midi standard.

For the 10th annual exhibition of the Dimensio group of experimental artists, at Kunsthalle Helsinki (1982), I constructed Master Chaynjis, the swearing robot.(3)

It was a human-looking head rolling around the exhibition hall on two wheels, limited by an umbilical cable connected to the ceiling carrying power and serial data. It had four collision sensors at each corner of the base frame, and a limitless vocabulary speech synthesizer onboard. It performed a fractal-tree-shaped dance on the floor and every time it collided with a wall or a visitor's foot, it swore. The worst thing it said was something like: "Oh, human fart."

The aggression worked better than I had anticipated. Two days before the end of the exhibition, a religious fanatic was told by his god to destroy the swearing robot. The body of M. Chaynjis is gone, but his immortal soul is safe on a 5 1/4 inch floppy disk, waiting for resurrection.

The virgin era of home computers ended when the Macintosh appeared in 1984. Still too slow for sampled sound without extra audio cards, it nevertheless quickly established itself as *the* art machine No. 1. Windows later copied the Mac GUI, but Apple originally plagiarized it from Xerox Palo Alto Research Center, the place of magical alchemists who invented things like the personal computer, the mouse, the graphical user interface (GUI), the Ethernet, and the Internet, and later ubiquitous computing.

Computer games emerged as something more forceful than any previously known form of art.

**Nineties: Internet,
Mobile Phone, Laptop**

It is too early to try to assess what really happened during the nineties. It has produced a kind of "Garden of forking paths."

The era of John Cage took over and ended with the ultimate compo-sition: a stretch of stationary white noise at 0 dB level, starting at minus infinity in time, and going to plus infinity in time. Interestingly, some results in mathematics hint at the possibility that this grand random stream is unique! (Try Google "Bernoulli shifts").

The laptop emerged as the most amazing musical instrument to date, with sufficient computing power to generate anything a human ear could differentiate.

Noughties: Present and Future

The mobile phone will become the ultimate musical instrument. Networked from Bluetooth to the Net, it will again allow spontaneous jam sessions, global and/or local, with or without acoustic local channels. Music will return to one of its main roots as a form of many-to-many social group communication, freed from the strict chain of command God → Composer → Performer → Audience.

A message to Nokia. The keys of the mobile phone must be larger, with longer travel and pressure-sensitive, for music playing. And they should be all around the device. The phone also needs the 6D positioning sensors, with 3 spatial and 3 angular coordinates. A name for this generic instrument? Phonephone, phonyphone, or simply phone?

But still more ultimately, the hardware of musical instruments will disappear. Combining silicon acceleration transducers mere millimetres in size with Bluetooth-like wireless, possibly inserted into fingertip bones, will give all the manual dexterity ever needed and make mechanical things like mice obsolete. For visual perception, tiny video projectors, implanted inside eyeballs, will project imag-

(1) TTL = Transistor-transistor logic. One of the (still) popular "logic families." MSI = medium scale integration, a few hundred transistors on a chip. Typical MSI logic functions per chip are: 4-bit ALU (arithmetic-logic unit), 16 flip-flops, 16-input data selector on decoder, 4-bit shift register and so on…

(2) Some acronyms: CPU central processing unit, RAM random access memory, ROM read-only memory, RS232 early serial interface standard, FSK frequency shift keying, DAC digital-to-analog converter, VCO voltage-controlled oscillator, VCF voltage-controlled filter, FET field-effect transistor.

(3) I was assisted by several people: Mikko Kurenniemi shaped the head, Hannu Viitasalo built the speech synthesizer, Matti Hyyppä built the motion frame, and Esa Laurema supplied the main motors.

(4) Take the set of divisors of 345600, that is, the numbers that divide evenly into 345600 without a remainder. Interpret these numbers as frequencies, as a musical scale. I call this set as the Just Chromatic Scale (JCS). Hear for yourself.
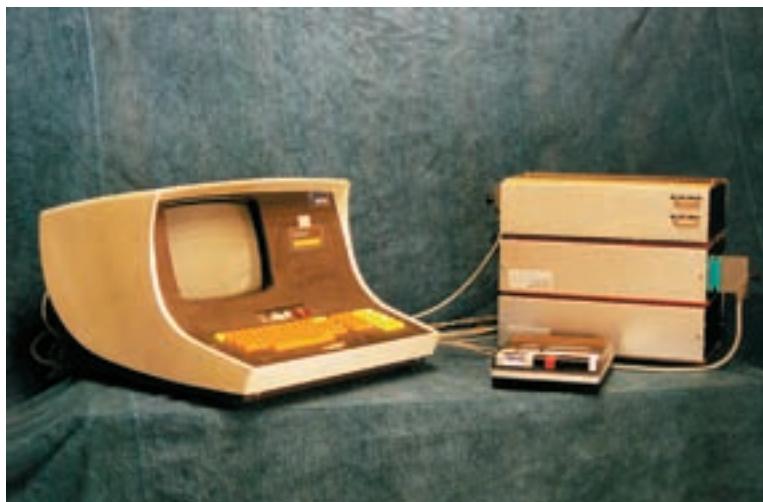
es directly onto the retina. Both technologies need a good power source to be developed, such as an implantable biobattery extracting electrical energy (or ATP) from the surrounding living cells.

Very soon, LED-sized and -shaped (and -priced) video chips with integrated optics will literally cover all the walls and ceilings around us. Farewell, Orwell! "Privacy" will be an obscene word (it already is, in some circles). Cells isolated from their surrounding social control may develop into terrorist or cancer cells.

I keep on working with tonal music theory, in terms of whole number divisibility and simple numerical

ratios, in the footsteps of Leonhard Euler (1707–1783). My present problem is to identify the triad chords in the divisor set of the "Donald Duck" number 345600.(4)

Having been mostly apolitical, except for slow drift from mild *Zen-Marxism* to still milder *liberal anarchism*, I now have a cause. The ideology of *sustainable development* is too slippery, because it does not specify absolute limits to change. I want to sharpen sustainable development into the *Museum Planet Earth* idea.

Briefly, this says that in step with the transhumanist fall into singularity, in less than 100 years, we should turn the planet Earth into a muse-

um. This means an asymptotically stopped change in the resident human population, biodiversity, biosphere, environmental chemistry, climate, and so on.

But, everything will be allowed: economic expansion, population explosion because people will no longer age, genetic science and nanotechnologies of unimaginable power, warfare and worse, in *space*. A deal?

To make this Utopian future more acceptable, I shall briefly describe its econopolitics. In 2100, for example, print 10 billion "Earth licences" and distribute them to all the then-living humans. No more licences will ever be printed. Licences can be sold. This

way, the people who want long life and long-lived children can have them, but only by migrating into space. This will be cheap, because there will be people wanting to stay down here, purchasing Earth licences at a price that will amply cover the price of the lift to orbit for the seller. +

Created by *Mathematica* (September 21, 2004)

Previous page, top left: Erkki Kurenniemi, The last Dimi-6000 was an analog synthesizer controlled by the first true microprocessor, the Intel 8008, 1974. Photo by Mikko Ojanen, 2004.

Previous page, top right: Erkki Kurenniemi on stage performing together with Pan sonic at the Avanto festival, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, November 2002. Left to right: Erkki Kurenniemi, Ilpo Väisänen, Mika Vainio and Carl Michael von Hausswolff. Photo by Petri Virtanen/Central Art Archives. © Finnish National Gallery.

Previous page, bottom left: Erkki Kurenniemi and media technician Esa Niiniranta testing out Erkki's DIMI-A at Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, 2002. Photo by Perttu Rastas.

Previous page, bottom right: Erkki Kurenniemi, Ilpo Väisänen and Mika Vainio, Berliner Festspiel, 25.3.2004. Photo by Jari Lehtinen.

Below: Erkki Kurenniemi, Generator unit in the first integrated digital/analog electronic music synthesizer, 1964. Photo by Mikko Ojanen, 2004.
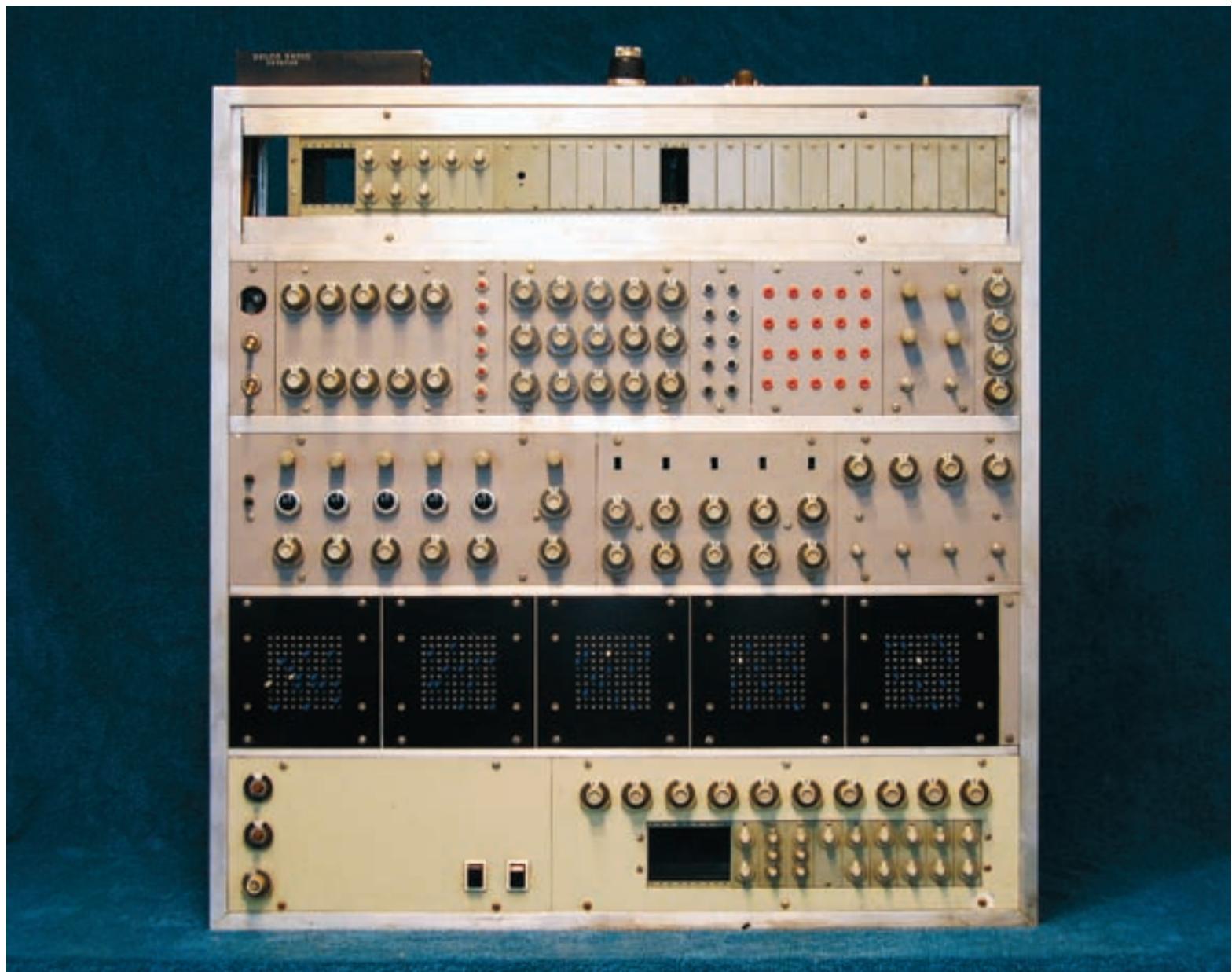
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Erkki Huhtamo

Trouble at the Interface, or the Identity Crisis of Interactive Art

I encountered an emerging phenomenon called 'interactive art' on my very first visit to *Ars Electronica* (Linz, Austria) in 1989. One of the works on display was a laserdisc installation called *Deep Contact* by the American artist Lynn Hershman. Sitting in front of a computer display the user was invited by a seductive young lady to "reach through the screen" and touch her. Operating a trackball interface, the user then entered a kind of 'garden of earthly delights', where erotically loaded incidents followed one another, challenging the user to reveal his/her desires or to face his/her inhibitions. As far as I remember, operating the piece in front of a curious circle of bystanders made most users uneasy (which had undoubtedly been the artist's intention). In the following years I soon encountered other works that have since been canonized as 'classics' of interactive art: Jeffrey Shaw's *The Legible City*; Myron Krueger's *Videoplace*; David Rokeby's *Very Nervous System*; Ken Feingold's *The Surprising Spiral*; Grahame Weinbren's *The Erl King and Sonata*; Luc Courchesne's *Portrait One: Marie*; Christa Sommerer and Laurent Mignonneau's *Interactive Plant Growing* and *A-Volve*; and Paul Sermon's *Telematic Dreaming*; among others.

As different as these works were, they all had something in common: they were exhibited in public spaces as installations, used computer technology, and were supposed to be 'activated' by the user. They required a physical effort on the part of the visitor to function and reveal their meanings. By clicking a mouse-like interface, rolling a track-ball, waving their hands, jumping, shouting or pedalling a bicycle users were invited to "realize" or "complete" the work that "would not exist" without their actions. The active role played by the spectator,

turned 'user' or 'interactor', was essential. The aim was to empower and challenge the visitor to go beyond the usual art spectatorship – the contemplatory, 'passive' attitude of the spectator standing in front of a painting or a statue. Of course, the reception of art itself can always be claimed to be 'active' (an argument frequently used by traditional art critics in their invectives against interactive art). However, interactive art added a haptic dimension to the mental activity: the visitor was not only allowed, but even required to touch the work. That touch – often physical, but sometimes mediated by a videocamera or a microphone, was central. Whether stated explicitly or merely implied, "Please Touch" – an echo of Duchamp's "Prière de toucher" – was the cornerstone of the aesthetics of interactive art. The 'user interface' was where the encounter between the work and the user took place.(1)

In retrospect it is easy to see these works as developments of the idea of 'interactive computing' that began to develop in the 1960s. Innovations such as time-sharing, AI, interactive graphics programs, visual displays and new interface devices such as light-pens, joysticks and the mouse inspired visionaries like Alan Kay, Nicholas Negroponte and Ted Nelson to see the relationship between the user and the computer as an increasingly symbiotic affair: both shared a 'common ground' and would eventually be learning from each other as the interaction continued, deepened and smartened. Artists like the ones mentioned above were inspired by such prophesies, taking the human-computer interaction to higher and more adventurous levels. However, they hardly took it at face value, often adding deliberate limitations, disturbances and 'noise' to the interactive system. Some of them questioned the

over-emphasis on the virtual, stressing the physical component of the process, the interacting body. Some criticized the ideal of simplified one-to-one interaction often found in commercial and industrial applications. Many of the early works could be characterized 'as metacommentaries' on interactivity, as I proposed some years ago.(2) The early 'interactive artists' made critical contributions to the emerging discourse on interactivity, already a force in Western culture on various levels from military applications to entertainment.

But this is not the whole story. The genealogy of interactive art is much more complex, although it can only be touched upon briefly here. In the broadest sense 'interactive media' are an outcome of the history of the human / machine relationship that goes back to the industrial revolutions that began in the second half of the eighteenth century. Partly to compensate for the monotony of work with office and factory machines, partly to profit from their 'attraction value' as tokens of a new era, lines of 'proto-interactive' devices were launched for both public and private use in the nineteenth century(3). In homes, philosophical toys like zoetropes and praxinoscopes encouraged the user into a playful and intimate relationship with optical technology; in public places vending machines, strength testers, mutoscope-like peep viewers and arcade games provided a tempting and pleasurable way of interacting with machines. Artists like Toshio Iwai, Mike Naimark and Ken Feingold have been highly conscious of this lineage, frequently referring to it in their works. Interactive art also has numerous precedents in the history of experimental art, from Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel* and *Rotoreliefs*, Thomas Wilfred's *Clavilux* and Frederick Kiesler's radical exhi-

bition designs to Fluxus happenings, Jean Tinguely's *Rotozaza*, Nam June Paik's *Participation TV* devices, "cybernetic sculptures" and closed circuit video-installations. Often the artists involved in 'proto-interactive' developments have been influenced by popular cultural forms like fairgrounds and amusement arcades (still favourite references for conservative critics writing about interactive art – the gallery "has been turned into a playground", etc.). The invitation to touch connoted deliberate disrespect and reckless pranksterism, but also a critique of culturally and institutionally sanctioned 'high art'. This was playfully expressed in *Zerseher* (Iconoclast) by Joachim Sauter and Dirk Lüsebrink (also awarded at *Ars Electronica*): by means of state-of-the-art eyetracking technology, the user's gaze was empowered to destroy a classical painting (actually, its digital replica).

Such genealogies apply well to the 'interactive classics' I listed above. Visiting *Ars Electronica* again this year (as I have done, with only one exception, since 1989) it was easy to see that things have changed. Interactive Art has been a category in the Prix Ars Electronica competition since 1990, and many of the artists mentioned above have walked up to the podium to claim their Golden Nicas (or one of the lesser distinctions). This year, however, the top award went to a work that, at first sight at least, had little, if anything, to do with interactive art and interactivity as we have come to know them. Ben Rubin's and Mark Hansen's *Listening Post* is an ambitious and impressive installation that has already been shown at prestigious art institutions like the Whitney Museum, and lauded by critics. It is certainly a work that deserved a prize, but did it deserve it in the Interactive Art category? That is the question. The answer may have consequences for the

very definition of interactive art, and perhaps even for its 'raison d'être'. For, compared with the 'interactive classics', there is nothing interactive about *Listening Post*: the audience stands, sits or lies in front of a large curved grid carrying 231 little electronic text displays.(4) Various forms of text fragments, captured from the innumerable chat rooms on the Internet, keep on appearing on the displays, selected by a computer program written by the artists. Words are also enunciated by a synthetic voice and occasional musical accents provided.

Many people I talked to described their experience of *Listening Post* in near-religious terms as meditative, sublime and elevating – watching the words appear and disappear endlessly and listening to the subtle declamation of the synthetic voice is hypnotic and captivating. It is easy to be lulled into a trance-like state, forgetting the passage of time and the surroundings – in spite of the fact that Rubin and Hansen tried to emphasize the reality effect of the soundbites (during *Ars Electronica*, references to the on-going Beslan hostage crisis kept on appearing from time to time). Someone also compared the experience to the cinema – facing the luminous wall of displays, many visitors chose to sit and watch. Although some people approached the work and even went behind it, there was no way of affecting the unfolding of the text; indeed, even the artists' control was limited to writing the computer program and setting up the system. Like a *deus otiosus*, idle god, they left the work to evolve on its own. This being the situation, it is quite legitimate to ask: Where is the interactivity? In what sense can this work be classified as interactive art?

One way to start looking for an answer is to read the jury's statement. According to them: "[u]nlike many works which could be classified as 'in-

teractive art' or 'net art', in which the human interaction often perpetuates an isolated interface, namely where it occurs, classically, between the user and a computer screen, *Listening Post* allows us to experience the totality of technology and Internet communication in a simultaneously immersive and humanizing way." The jury points out that the work "makes manifest our [the jury's] expanded definition of interactivity and criteria in that the reception and contemplation of this work does not require the active audience participation that was so crucial in the early stages of the development of the genre." Finally, the jury admits that while "'system interaction' with varying degrees of audience involvement was part of the definition of possible interactive works in prior years", giving the Golden Nica to a work like Listening Post is something unprecedented and "suggests productive alignments of interactive work with other arts traditions in the future."(5)

The jury defines its "expanded definition of interactivity" by formulating three criteria: (1) mediation by computer is not a requirement, (2) the constraints of "real-time" and directness of interaction should be relaxed, and (3) passive interaction will be allowed. As a consequence, the "reception and contemplation of an 'interactive work' may not require the 'active participation' that was so crucial to the earlier stages of the development of the genre."(6) The jury has also reviewed the statements by the previous juries, noting the broadening of the field and its changing definitions. It seems, however, that the criteria the 2004 jury has proposed present the most radical challenge to the 'old school' interactive art we have seen so far. Not only is using digital technology no longer a requirement. The need for real-time interaction between the user and the system has been "relaxed"

and the idea of "passive interaction" (a contradiction in terms) enforced. Taken together, these amendments may easily lead to the conviction that 'old school' interactive art has had its day and is in the process of being replaced by something else, the outlines of which we don't yet quite perceive. If this is so, wouldn't it be best to give up the label 'interactive art' altogether – or save it for the 'old school' work emphasizing direct active interaction between the user and the piece – and replace it with something else?

However, the situation may not be quite as dramatic as it seems. First of all, as already explained, the 'roots' of interactive art go far beyond the era of digital technology. It is quite possible to conceive complex user-activated interactive artworks that don't require computers at all. The richly imaginative, but little noted work by the San Francisco-based artist Bernie Lubell is a convincing example. Lubell's wooden (!) interactive installations are activated by complex systems of cranks, pulleys gears and diaphragms; one of them got its inspiration from the artificial heart described by Étienne-Jules Marey in the 19th century another one is effectively a large-scale wooden – digital! – computer! When it comes to the second criterion, although achieving real-time interaction may have been a goal for some interactive artists, it has also been questioned for years. In most of his interactive works ever since *Surprising Spiral* (1991), Ken Feingold has deliberately disturbed the potential one-to-one relationship between the user and the work by introducing time-delayed responses from the system or by creating programs that 'misunderstand' the user's actions, but only to a degree. The users have frequently felt puzzled and frustrated, which is one of Feingold's goals – his works investigate the different uses and meanings of interactiv-

ity, including those used by the military and the entertainment world, where 'control' and 'mastery' are self-evident goals. Feingold's works show that something that is 'interactive' is not automatically liberating or empowering – interactive media can be used to alienate and control users like any other medium, producing 'automated' reactions and responses. Its liberating potential needs to be discovered and defended.(7)

When it comes to the final criterion, the "passive interaction", one could point to the development from David Rokeby, whose *Very Nervous System* figures prominently on the 'classics' list. While *Very Nervous System* (like Krueger's *Videoplace*) aimed at creating a tight and continuous feedback loop between the user's body motions and the system's responses, Rokeby's more recent works have often emphasized the role and functioning of the digital system and left the user in a more passive role. In *Giver of Names* the user's contribution is limited to selecting objects and placing them on a pedestal, to be analyzed by the work; the user then reads and listens to the work's pronouncements, turning into an observer. In *(n)Chant*, another Golden Nica winner (2003), the user can actually talk to a network of "givers of names", but the most important developments happen within the system itself. In another series of works Rokeby has pointed his video camera at unsuspecting bystanders, analyzing the implications of the rampant surveillance in Western society and investigating its potential artistic uses. As always, Rokeby uses the technology with style and tact, hinting at rather than committing breaches of privacy. Still, it is a long, albeit logical journey from the bodily *jouissance* of *Very Nervous System* (now continued by the ecstatic players of the popular arcade game *Dance Dance Revolution*) to the

more restrained, analytic, observing or even unaware participant of Rokeby's later works.(8)

As this shows, the criteria for the "expanded definition of interactivity" formulated by the Prix Ars Electronica jury are not totally unprecedented. Then why did I, as well as a number of other seasoned festival participants, react so strongly against giving *Listening Post* an award in the interactive art category? Simply because the work excludes the problematic of user interaction across an interface altogether. If there is interaction with this work, it is entirely mental, like that experienced by a cinema spectator or an art lover meditating in front of Leonardo's *Last Supper* or surrounded by Giotto's frescoes in the Arena Chapel. Of course, *Listening Post* is an 'alive', constantly metamorphosing multimedia environment, but this does not dramatically change the constitution of its observer, who remains at the same time present and separate from the work. There is nothing else to do beside watching, listening, and immersing oneself in the experience. The automated functions of the software analyzing the elusive network traffic have been given centre stage, displayed in an aesthetically evocative form. Of course, there are other humans present beside the spectators: the anonymous subjects occupying the Internet's countless chat rooms at any one moment. However, their input is treated as raw material for a data aesthetics which is basically statistical. The individual voices are not singled out, nor are they made aware of their participation in the artwork. Indeed, this work could be read as a celebration of the "collective intelligence" that Pierre Lévi has been writing about for years.

Of course, as the jury attempts, one may look for an outlet by talking about "system interaction". Indeed, "system interaction" has been a prominent feature of such important recent works as Ken Rinaldo's *Autopoiesis* and Rokeby's *(n)Chant*. Although these works accept input from human participants, the processes happening internally between the different networked 'units' of these works (in
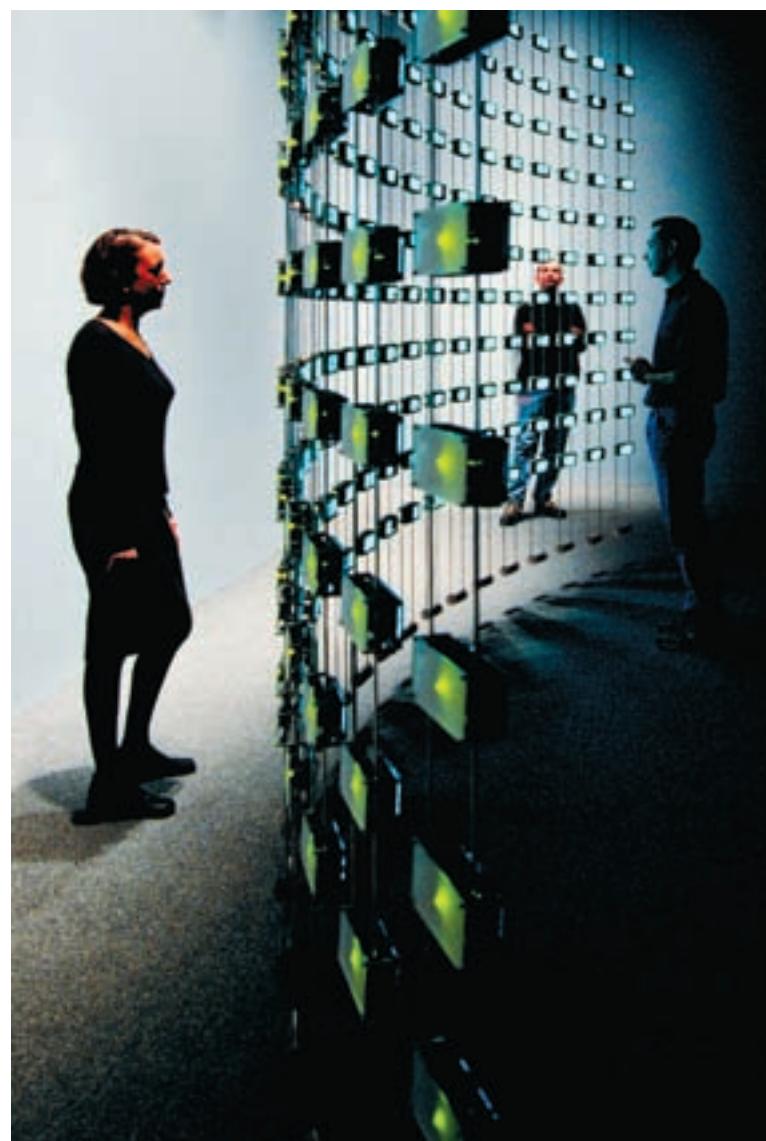
Rinaldo's case, a flock of robotic creatures able to sense each other's presence and reactions, as well as receive stimuli from the outside) are at least as interesting and challenging. However, when active human input is totally lacking, as in the case of *Listening Post*, the work constitutes a system that could be characterized as autonomous. Like old automata, the work performs certain pre-choreographed actions for enchanted spectators kept at a distance. In the field of the media arts we have encountered numerous works that have functioned like this, from László Moholy-Nagy's *Licht-Raum Modulator* to Jean Tinguely's motorized sculptures and Harold Cohen's *Aaron*, an expert system creating drawings and paintings at least

semi-autonomously.(9) All these, and many other works, have been based on the principle of system interaction, but until now labelling them as interactive art has never been proposed. Indeed, system interaction as such could be claimed to be the opposite of user interaction. It deliberately marginalizes the active participation of the user, placing the machine and its operations in the centre.(10)

In fact, "system interaction" may be just a new label for a phenomenon that used to be known as 'cybernetic systems'. Cybernetics, of course, refers to the study of communication and feedback mechanisms within complex systems, both human and technological. Autonomous cybernetic operations have become part of the func-

tioning of any digital system, including interactive ones. That, however, does not warrant calling any cybernetic system interactive. If the word interactive is to retain anything of its former distinctiveness, it should perhaps be reserved for cases where active and repeated user input plays a significant role in the functioning of the system. From such a perspective, computer and video games are clearly an interactive medium; games relying entirely on "system interaction" would be an absurd idea. Of course, interactive art can – and should – stretch the definition of interactivity and explore its limits, but I feel that user interaction should remain an essential part of its territory. In this sense another of this year's award winners, Osman Khan's and Daniel Sauter's *We interrupt your regularly scheduled program*, was an interesting test case. The work transforms the television program flow into an abstracted digital stream of pixels (seen as if emanating from a TV set facing the wall). The user's role is limited to switching TV channels with a remote controller. In spite of its minimal and 'banal' character, this is a meaningful – and interactive – gesture within the aims and thematic concerns of the work.

This, of course, does not solve all our problems. There are problematic cases, like Ken Rinaldo's *Augmented Fish Reality* that received the jury's distinction. Two Siamese fighting fish inhabit fish bowls that have been placed on motorized platforms with wheels. By interrupting laser beams crossing the bowls the fish can 'drive' their bowl-worlds around the room. Amazing, but is it interactive art? One might reason that the fish are surrogates for human interactors, which would qualify the work at least as a "meta-interactive" piece. Much the same could be said about interactive performances, like Golan Levin and Zachary Lieberman's *Messa di Voce* (Honorary Mention). The audience for this work (which was performed at last year's *Ars Electronica*) merely observes the actors using their voices to create and manipulate projected visuals by means of Levin's and

Lieberman's software. However, unlike Rinaldo's *Augmented Fish Reality*, *Messa di Voce* can also be turned into an 'old school' interactive installation, with the audience taking the place of the professional actors. The work was successfully shown in this form at this year's *Ars Electronica* exhibition.

Interactive art was launched before the Internet made its breakthrough as a 'universal' medium. The modes of interactivity in network communication seem quite different from, and possibly more complex than, those explored by the early 'interactive artists'. Consequently, there have been relatively few works that have managed to combine 'remote interaction' on the Internet with 'local interac-

tion' within a physical space. Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's *Vectorial Elevation* (Golden Nica 2001) attempted to do this on an extraordinary scale, empowering Internet users to control a battery of robotic searchlights around Mexico City's central Zocalo Square. While the Internet part was truly interactive, the local audience was offered a spectacular lightshow, with no controls or feedback channels.(11) At *Prix Ars Electronica*, Internet-based projects have usually been segregated from 'interactive art'. This should have happened in the case of *Listening Post* which clearly deserved an award, only not the one it got. Perhaps "net vision" would have been a better category if only the net vision jury had not had a totally different agenda. So

it looks like it is time to re-define categories. At least stretching the definition of interactive art in the manner of this year's jury causes more confusion than clarity. It might be suggested that 'interactive art' as a category would be reserved for works where user interaction plays a significant role. Perhaps an entirely new category should be created to accommodate works like *Listening Post*. 'Cybernetic art' it cannot be, 'system art' it should not be. 'Intra-active art' would sound too hermetic. 'Database aesthetics' might be a possibility, as it would by-pass the difficulties associated with concepts like user interaction, passive interaction and system interaction, and more database-related work is certainly on the way. +

(1) Duchamp used the text "Prière de Toucher" on the inner cover of the exhibition catalogue Le surrealisme en 1947 which he designed. On the cover of the catalogue there was a foam-rubber breast. See *Marcel Duchamp*, edited by the Museum Jean Tinguely Basel, Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje-Cantz, 2002, 134-135. Ken Feingold referred to Duchamp's work in the book-looking touch-screen interface of his installation *The Surprising Spiral* (1991). On back of 'the book' was the name "Pierre de Toucher", supposedly its 'author'.
(2) See my "Seeking Deeper Contact. Interactive Art as Metacommentary", *Convergence*, Vol.1, N:o 2 (Autumn 1995), pp. 81-104 (University of Luton & John Libbey, U.K.).
(3) See my "Slots of Fun, Slots of Trouble. Toward an Archaeology of Electronic Gaming", in *Handbook of Computer Games Studies*, edited by Joost Raessens & Jeffrey Goldstein, Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press (forthcoming 2005).
(4) At the Whitney Museum it was also possible to walk around the structure, I was told by Mark Hansen. The lighting in the room at

Ars Electronica was darker than in some other venues, making the effect of the work more dramatic.
(5) "Rearview Mirror: 1990-2004" (statement of the interactive art jury), in *Cyberarts 2004*, edited by Hannes Leopoldseder, Christine Schöpf and Gerfried Stocker, Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje-Cantz, 2004, 110. (The jury members were Scott deLahunta, Peter Higgins, Hiroshi Ishii, Tomoe Moriyama, Elaine Ng.)
(6) Ibid., 106
(7) About Feingold's art, see my "*Sur*real-time Interaction, or How to Talk to a Dummy in a Magnetic Mirror?", *ArtIntact 3. CD-ROMagazin interaktiver Kunst*, Karlsruhe: Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie and Cantz Verlag, 1996, 30-55.
(8) I have written about Rokeby's art in two articles: "Silicon Remembers Ideology, or David Rokeby's meta-interactive art", in the catalogue *David Rokeby: The Giver of Names*, edited by Anne McPherson and Deborah Esch, Guelph, Ontario: MacDonald Stewart Art Centre, 1998, 16-30; "Adventures in Middle Space", *Horizon Zero*, Issue 3: Invent (Autumn 2002), Banff: The

Banff Center for the Arts, 2002, available online at www.horizonzero.ca/flashindex.html
(9) Cohen has created the system and written the AI-influenced software. He sets the parameters and starts the painting process that continues autonomously from then on. Cohen claims that he cannot control the outcome of the painting process in advance. In a sense, Cohen's role is no different from that of the mainframe computer operator of the early days. He sets the problem, starts the operation and inspects the result. He does not interact continuously with the system while it is functioning
(10) A classic discussion of these issues is Jack Burnham's *Beyond Modern Sculpture*, New York: George Braziller, 1968.
(11) See my "Re-Positioning Vectorial Elevation. Media Archaeological Considerations", in Rafael Lozano-Hemmer: *Alzado Vectorial. Relational Architecture No.4*, Mexico City: Publications Department, National Council for Culture and the Arts (Mexico), and Impresiones y Ediciones San Jorge, S.A. de C.V., 2000, 98-113. Lozano-Hemmer was aware of the issue, and tried to resolve it by installing public Internet terminals in public spaces.

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Mauri Kaipainen

Self-organizing Maps, Soft Ontologies and Multiple Perspectives in Media Art:

Introduction

Contemporary media art and interaction design constitute a cloud of multifaceted phenomena, which, due to their very nature, tend toward different kinds of relationships with technology and research. They involve, for example, nonlinear storytelling and narrative spaces, multimodality of experience and input/output channels. They play around with all available media technologies and formats, seeking to challenge conventional borderlines of content and media, as well as those of culture, technology and commerce, often raising ethical and human issues. In its novel functions, the new digital culture also often adopts scientific methods with which to tackle complicated challenges, such as representation, visualization, storytelling management and interface and interaction design. This paper discusses new media applications of a particular visualizing and clustering method, the Self-Organizing Map (SOM), first introduced by Teuvo Kohonen(1) as implemented in various new media projects presented at a symposium held in Kiasma on 7 May, 2004.

A SOM is a widely known method for visualization and data organization. In addition to the basic use, it can also be applied in various other ways relevant to media art, for example, as a core interface element, as a medium of participation and interaction, and as a representational foundation for nonlinear storytelling logics. It is an artificial neural network model, built on a set of assumptions that imitate the activity of cortical neurons with a simple iterative algorithm. The beauty of this approach is that the resulting order is reminiscent of cortical maps, such as tonotopies, that is, maps of sounds, or somatotopies, maps of tactile sensations of the skin and organs. The method can be regarded as a suggestion for how the neural system makes sense of environmental complexity.

The typical input to the algorithm is large and feature-rich data whose internal organization and distribution is poorly known in advance, such as metadata associated with rich media content, or data tracked from human behaviour in interactive settings. In return, as its output the model organizes the given data into similarity clusters on a two-dimensional map, technically a projection from a multidimensional feature space to a space of lesser dimensionality, thus potentially revealing implicit similarity relations within the material.

In addition to its primary function in the visualization of complex content, SOMs have been used in our domain in various ways, as an adaptive intelligence in interactive storytelling and narrative engines, as a navigation map in interfaces and as a means of creating an experience of participation and even immersion. All of the works discussed in this paper are either completed or in progress in the Media Lab at the University of Art and Design Helsinki, or in collaboration with it. Before introducing such applications, it is useful to look at the fundamental implications of this particular approach to both metadata and the development of ontology in digital media.

Soft Ontologies

Like most statistical methods, a SOM assumes the representation of data in terms of numerical vectors. In the CIPHER project, vector representation is adopted on a broader scale as the comprehensive basis of *soft ontology*(2) in metadata. The goals of CIPHER include annotation tools that support effective soft ontology building, and demonstrations of the virtues of soft ontologies in different domains of cultural content.

As a concept, soft ontology refers to a flexible vector-formatted description of the micro-level features of cultural artefacts and contents. The de-

scription is based on a variety of media-specific features that may be meaningless alone, but can potentially form part of an emergent bigger picture when analyzed with appropriate statistical visualization methods, such as SOM. The word "soft" refers to several properties that make such representation flexible and dynamic: bottom-up nature of the representation, dynamically adaptive number of descriptive dimensions, flat-hierarchies, and tailorability. Additional flexibility is achieved by applying random vector coding, originally developed for exploring large textual corpuses(3) which effectively allows an *open-ended ontology with any number of descriptive features*. We can see immediately that this is an absolutely necessary condition for any curatorial or analytical practice, in which people describe artefacts or media content using their own conceptual tools.

The *bottom-up* nature of such representation means that artefacts, or media content, can be described in terms of the kinds of properties that appear to carry significance on the fundamental level of practice, for example, the actual process of authoring narrative spaces, or designing interactive access to media content. This contrasts with typical metadata approaches, in which one has to ensure the consistency of categorization, determine the number of descriptive features and fix the hierarchical structure of the ontology "given from above"; a case in point is the global Semantic Web project. The soft ontology approach, on the other hand, does not assume an *a priori* consensus of hierarchical category structures and associated semantics, the representation allows such hierarchies to *emerge* from the soft-ontology level. Obviously, the approach implies that there is no single 'true' and shared structure to the content described on such a primitive level, but it promotes multiple perspectives and

the tailorability of the content structure to each spectator or event. An important issue and a challenge for future projects is how the bottom-up approach can be made to work as a complement of the Semantic Web.

Visualization and Content Organization

The basic function of SOMs is to organize large and complex data sets into similarity maps in which holistically similar objects are clustered near each other, showing which features tend to go together. *CinemaSense* is an Internet site and a rich source of study material on film production, including links, articles and video clips and pictures. *CinemaSense* applies a SOM to visualize concepts and extensive media materials.

In *Pockets Full of Memories*, displayed in Kiasma in May through August, 2004, visitors were asked to photograph the contents of their pockets and describe them using both predetermined descriptive dimensions and their own words, relating the objects to their personal memories. The cumulative collection of objects thus described was organized into a SOM where visitors could see their own objects in relation to other people's belongings.

In *Election Star*, the SOM has two functions, providing the core of the user interface and serving as a tool for creating the preconditions for participation. *Election Star* is a live political talk show based on a voting engine, an extremely popular and influential Internet service in Finland, in which political candidates profile their political agendas with questionnaires based on hot political issues. The public, in turn, can use the service to match their own views against the politicians' profiles to find the best candidate to vote for. In our own project, the original text list output was first replaced with a SOM that allows a better view of and access to the large and complex set of

(1) Kohonen, T. (1982). Self-organized formation of topologically correct feature maps. *Biological Cybernetics* 43:59-69.
(2) Áviles Collao, Jazmin; Diaz-Kommonen, L.; Kaipainen, M.; Pietarila, J. (2003). Soft Ontologies and Similarity Cluster Tools to Facilitate Exploration and *Discovery of Cultural Heritage Resources*. Paper in DEXA 2003. September 1.-5.2003, Prague, Czech Republic.
(3) Honkela, T.; Kaski, S.; Lagus, K.; Kohonen, T. (1996). Newsgroup Exploration with WEBSOM Method and Browsing Interface.

Helsinki University of Technology, Lab. of Computer and Information Science. Report A 32.
(4) Kerminen, A.; Raike, A.; Kaipainen, M. (2000). Self-organizing map browser for database retrieval. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Istituto di Ricerca sulle Onde Elettromagnetiche. Proceedings of 6th ERCIM Workshop, User Interfaces for All. Convitto della Calza, Florence, Italy, Oct 25-26 2000.
(5) Kaipainen, M.; Koskenniemi, T.; Kerminen, A.; Raike, A.; Ellonen, A. (2001). Presenting

data as similarity clusters instead of lists. Data from local politics as an example. -Stephanidis, C. (2001). Universal Access in HCI: Towards an Information Society for All, Mahwah, NJ, London: Lawrence
(6) Berg, M. (2004). Emergent political concepts in explorative interface visualization. Master's thesis, Helsinki University of Technology.
(7) Vuori, R. (2004). The Aelaemmoeloe soundscape generator and the Obsession augmented cinema narrative engine. Two authoring tool prototypes for narrative logic in sample based gener-

ative media. Final thesis, Media Lab, University of Art and Design Helsinki.
(8) Tikka, P.; Kaipainen, M. (2003). Manuscapes as Media Ecologies. Media Ecology Association Fourth Annual Convention, Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York, June 5–8, 2003.
(9) Hynna, K.; Kaipainen, M. (2003). Activation-Based Recursive Self-Organizing Maps. A General formulation and Empirical Results. Neural Processing Letters (in press).

Examples of Self-organizing Approaches in Media Art, Interaction and Interface Design

information. Considerable effort was expended to optimize the interface of which the SOM is the core element (4, 5, 6). The enhanced map version was in public use in the Finnish EU elections in 2004, and its refined version will serve the communal elections in autumn 2004. In the TV show, the map is used as an online political "weather map", which reflects audience feedback sent in via SMS or the Internet, resulting in instant changes in the candidate's position on the map, thus further fuelling the debate. In this case the map serves participation and presence in the show in a very particular way.

Narrative Spaces and Storytelling Logics

In interactive media art, new conceptualizations of narrative are being explored, based on the possibilities created by the digital media. Applied to storytelling, the multiple views enabled by soft ontologies can be exploited to compute the system's responses to the participant who assumes different points of view to the narrative space.

An example of the possibilities of such applications is *Obsession*, an interactive cinema installation that will appear in Kiasma in autumn 2005, based on the material of Pia Tikka's short film by the same title. In its prototype version *Vieristymiä*, the audience's spatial movements were related to the narrative content of the work and transformed into a computational 'mask'. The mask controlled a stochastic logic that chose and mixed the audiovisual components of the installation. A modular software toolset(7) was devel-

oped in this project, one which is general enough to also serve as a tool for other storytelling logics projects. It includes a fragment editor for defining temporal handles of video fragments, an annotation tool for defining the soft ontology of video fragments, and a stochastic 'narrative engine' that drives the narrative flow in interaction with users.

Another example is *Accidental Lovers*, a TV format in which SMS messages from the audience are used to drive the narrative of an unlikely love story, acted on screen by chatbots. One key issue is related to language technology, that is, how to make sense of the unlimited vocabulary of the SMS messages so as to control the story flow. Random vector encoding appears as a partial answer to this, although a solution must be found which allows also fixed keywords and rules required by the script.

Yet another project, *Rune Dreams*, is in preparation, in which soft ontology descriptions are used for computing SOM prototypes ('flower bouquets'), for mixing video clips, still photos, music and voiceover, all in harmony with a coherent story universe, as a response to a participant's position within in the installation.

All of these projects serve as cases of the *INiCS* research programme, whose goal is to explore and formulate different narrative logics built on the foundation of a uniform low-level vector representation, or soft ontology. This concept is founded on elementary vector description, multidimensional narrative spaces, spatial projections and multiple perspectives. A core met-

aphor for the concept is adopted from physics, the model of a ball rolling down the steepest slope in a mountain landscape, seeking to minimize energy. In another concept, *Manuscape*,(8) an additional third dimension above the SOM-type map of narrative elements works the same way, defining a default narrative path, or director's cut, which will happen in case there is no participant interruption. The participant, however, can make an extra effort to choose another tract by 'climbing' over a ridge. Tools to design narrative spaces, or "landscapes", are among the INiCS objectives.

The shortcoming of SOMs, particularly from the point of view of narrative, is that they are a *nontemporal* means of organizing content, while narrative art is typically time-contextual. An effort towards a temporal context-sensitive SOMs has been made within the *Interact* project. The project has been developing and testing an *Activation-based Recursive Self-Organizing Map* (ARSOM),(9) which is basically aware of its own previous activities and can, on the basis of that information, compute a path to follow. This particular algorithm may provide some starting points for the challenge of defining algorithmic narrative logics. In a broader context, it is one contribution to the global effort of making sense of mind and narrative in temporal and dynamic context. Work on the heirs of SOMs, by focusing on the problem of temporal context in particular, is being done on a global scale, and will offer interesting opportunities for storytelling logics. Among other relevant instruments are

Bayesian statistics and different models of complex systems.

Summary

The applications of Self-Organizing Maps in our domain are just examples of the rich interrelations between media art and science. This particular algorithm has attracted many artists to explore its possibilities, due to its intuitively sense-making way of organizing content, partly perhaps due to the similarity it bears to neural systems and the apparent explanatory value it therefore has. In addition to visualization and content organization, it has been applied as an interface module, as a core element of algorithmic narrative logics, a media mixer, and it has been used as a means of participation. However, there are many other options for the computational core of new media besides SOM.

From a broader point of view, however, the most important impact of the SOM paradigm has been that it has drawn attention to nature's self-organizing phenomena in general, and to multi-perspective computational approaches in particular. This seems like a perfect match with interactive media art, exploring ways to distance itself from exclusively author-driven art forms, giving ever more power and room to the participant. The work on flexible elementary-scale ontologies, or soft ontologies, paves the way for uniform metadata descriptions that, in turn, allow multiple-perspective access to massive archives and the building of powerful narrative engines in different interactive settings, among other things, in media art applications. +

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Below: *The Gathering*, 2002. The Vikingskipet Olympic Arena, Hamar, Norway, 27.3.–31.3. 2002. Photo by Espen Lyngaas. © *The Gathering.*

Juha Huuskonen

The Art of Defining Software Culture:

"If you are using software made by someone else, you are living in that person's dream"(1). The limitations of available software tools often set the limits of how we use current technologies, or even what possible uses we can imagine for them. Open source community, media activists, VJ community, demo scene and many other global movements have broken free from these limitations by actively developing new software concepts and tools.

The Read_me festival for software cultures is bringing together many of these communities. This is not an easy task, since even though all of them are experimenting and developing software, they have radically different motivations for their activities. The festival organisers have developed methods which allow these communities to be involved in defining the content of the festival and meaning of the term 'software cultures'.

The Hot Stuff

At first glance, the communities experimenting with software development can seem very different from the world of media art. But if one makes the effort to learn the basic jargon, similarities with the art world start to emerge. Exhibitions are replaced by festivals or laptop jams, catalogues by

websites and discussions forums, curators by competitions and online polls.

A good example of a community with a sophisticated self-organised structure is 'demo scene', a movement that developed around the early home computers (Commodore, Atari, early PCs) in the late 80's. The main activity of the demo scene is to create 'demos', real-time software shows with graphics, music and visual software effects. A demo is the collective effort of a group, and the goal is to beat the other groups by coming up with original demo concepts and maintaining high quality in design. The collaborative work process to produce a major demo can often take months or even years to complete. Various charts (such as Eurochart) follow the demo scene on a longer time span, allowing people to vote for their all-time favourite demos, groups and individual creators. The most respected groups form an 'elite', at the bottom of the hierarchy are beginners with only few skills.

The original system for distributing work within the demo scene tells about the level of commitment and persistence of the sceners. On the darker side of the demo scene, 'crackers' were making games and commercial software available for the community by breaking their copy protec-

tions. Pirate copies of software and demos were spread by 'swappers' and 'BBS hosts'. The swappers would frequently send out disks by regular mail to dozens of contacts around the world. The disks would contain the latest piece of software they had in their hands. Within a week or two, the contacts would return the disks, with copies of the 'hottest stuff' they had themselves. This relatively random system functioned as a surprisingly efficient data distribution network long before the days of the Internet.

The most important arenas for evaluating demos are 'parties', events which bring together hundreds or even thousands of sceners. People show up with their computers and sleeping bags for a weekend of heavy Coke drinking, pizza eating and competing with demos. Some of the oldest and well-known parties are *Assembly* in Finland, *The Party* in Denmark and *The Gathering* in Norway. Similar events are also regularly organised by the VJ community, media activists and hackers. For the VJs, there are festivals and laptop jams such as *AVIT* and *SHARE*, hackers and activists come together in events like *HAL 2001* (Hackers At Large 2001) and *CCC* (Chaos Computer Camp). These events are important for the social ties

within the network, and they offer an opportunity for people to get feedback and recognition for their work.

Today the demo scene still thrives by integrating itself to other subcultures. The demo scene parties are now also known as LAN parties, events where large groups of people join the same local area network to play games in teams. After getting bored with playing games, some of these people will eventually join the ranks of sceners and start experimenting with creating graphics, music or software.

A Jungle of Software

The VJ scene has attracted thousands of new adherents in the past few years, ranging from visual artists to filmmakers and clubbers. The sudden development has a lot to do with the fact that home computers finally have the processing power to properly handle real-time video processing. The situation is similar to the early days of home VCRs, when artists such as David Rokeby, Myron Krueger and Erkki Kurenniemi created interactive audiovisual installations and performances with their custom hardware instruments. Now the standard tool of the VJ has changed from a video mixer to a laptop and custom hardware has been replaced by custom soft-
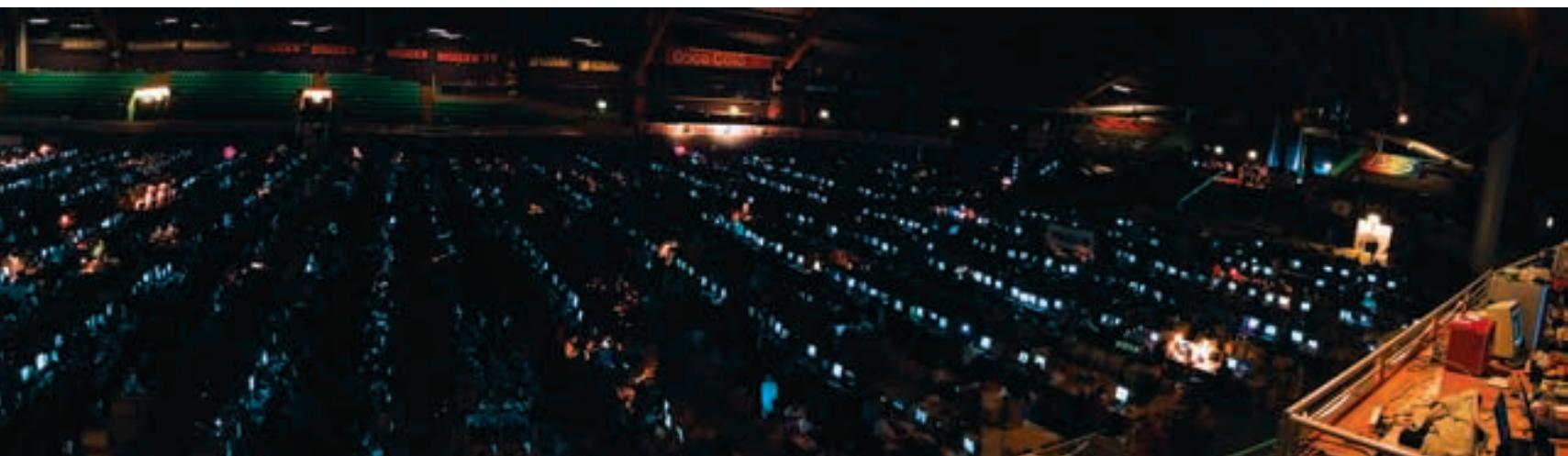
The Benevolent Dictators of the Read_me Festival

ware. Around one hundred new tools for VJs have been released during the past couple of years, mostly made by VJs themselves.

In a similar way, media activists are actively developing tools for their own use. One impressive example is the indymedia network, a global network of organisations which are all hosting local versions of an early self-publishing software. This software was an answer to the urge of the activists to create a channel for uncensored and rapid commentary on current events. It was a pioneering tool in an area that has now grown into a vast universe of weblogs. Indymedia organisations are still active today and have an important role as alternative news resources.

Sceners, VJs, hackers and activists who are involved in software development often openly borrow and steal ideas from others. This is possible since, because there are few if any financial interests involved, one does not have to be afraid of lawsuits if one takes an idea and tries to develop it further. Quite the contrary, this is one of the basic principles of collective development. One can start learning by imitating what others are doing, and only after a certain time of practising is one expected to bring in something

new. The fact that software developers are just like any other people in the community makes it easier for others to contribute ideas or even start developing software on their own.

Each software tool presents a different set of concepts and working methods, based on different visions of what the community is about. The constant development of software keeps the community on its toes, constantly questioning its values and goals.

**The Invisible Barriers
around Self-organised Communities**
Sceners, VJs, hackers and activists have built their own alternative universes outside the traditional disciplines of art and science. This creates a strong empowering effect, the community itself is seen to be in charge and there is space for creativity and experimentation. At the same time, this disconnection can be very limiting for the longer term development of the community.

Software cultures bring together people of all ages, nationalities and educational or professional backgrounds. One can imagine that this would make the communities very open-minded and tolerant of ideas coming from other contexts. The real-

ity is different – the fact that the members of the community do not share the same background makes it difficult for the community to step outside its barriers. The discussions within the community tend to focus on the community itself simply because that is the only common subject to talk about.

Another factor contributing to the closed nature of the communities is the widely spread practice of using aliases. It is impossible to guess the real identities of the demo sceners Yolk, Tsunami and Carebear or the VJs Hello World and Bionicpope. This makes the community more democratic – it is easier for anyone to slip from the role of a passive observer to that of an active contributor – but it also increases the community's distance from the outside world.

It can also be said that the sheer volume and chaotic nature of the communities make it impossible to develop them in a certain direction. The phenomenon can be described as 'mass-amateurization', to borrow a term that has been used to compare blogging with professional journalism. Mainstream media have to compete with thousands of alternative versions of the same story, written by people with varying motivations and levels of expertise. This makes it more difficult

First *Placard Event* in Finland, 22.5.-23.5.2004, Fred´s apartment, Meritullinkatu in Helsinki. Photo by Juha Huuskonen.

PixelACHE festival in New York, 31.5.–3.6. 2003, Gershwin Hotel, SHARE event at Open Air club, Galapagos art space. Photo by Antti Ahonen. © Antti Ahonen and Piknik Frequency ry.

Links: www.scene.org (Demo scene community site); www.vjcentral.com (VJ community website); www.runme.org (Runme software art repository and Read_Me software art festival); www.katastro.fi (Electronic art and subcultures network)

to define what should be considered expertise. Having an understanding of a special subject can be more valuable than knowledge of the principles of journalism. Instead of understanding the big picture, one should have a good understanding of the interests of a certain small community.

The closed nature of software cultures can also prevent fruitful exchange of knowledge from taking place. For example, some of the new VJ tools could be useful for people working with cinema or theatre. And vice versa, the VJs could definitely make use of lessons learned in the history of cinematography and story-telling. Unfortunately there are currently only a few projects trying to make such crossover communication happen.

The Benevolent Dictators of the *Read_Me Festival*

One successful example of how these communities can be brought togeth-er is the *Read_me* festival. Maybe we could learn something from the way it evolved into its current format.

When Alexei Shulgin (one of the *Read_Me* festival initiators and curators) gave a presentation at the *D.I.N.A* festival in Bologna, he focused on proving there is nothing new in what Netochka Nezvanova (creator of the Nato.0+55 video performance software) is doing. His proof was based on his own definition of net art a few years back. The presentation was especially surprising, because the next presenter on the programme was Netochka herself, or rather one of her alter egos. Netochka Nezvanova (which can be roughly translated as "nameless nobody") is a character created by the programmers of the Nato software, a young aggressive female who is actively spamming several popular discussion forums using her own language (appl!ng 0+1 kaoz teor!e 2 0+1 evakuaz!on rout!n).

The *Read_Me 1.2* festival in Moscow continued in a similar vein, with curators coming up with definitions for software art and selecting works for the festival on the basis of the definition. Fortunately, a sharp u-turn was made when the festival was organised again the following year in Helsinki. An online software art repository (www.runme.org) was created, where categories and definitions are continuously evolving based on the submissions. Currently there is a substantial amount of work in several categories (audiovisual artistic tools, for example) which were originally excluded from the festival. The term software art has been replaced by software culture, and an online tool opens the process of defining the meaning of the term to the communities themselves. The power is in the hands of those who actually contribute something.

The curators of the project still have a chance to leave out work, and they often do (for example, so far all submissions from the demo scene have been rejected). To borrow a term from the open source community, the curators of *Runme* are the 'benevolent dictators' of the project. In theory they have absolute power to decide what happens within the project, but the only way for them to succeed is to keep the community happy. If enough resistance builds up, the project will split into two camps (referred to as 'forks', to borrow another term from open source software development), which will continue in different directions. Should such a situation occur, it would actually be a sign of the success of the *Runme* website and the *Read_Me* festival. It would show that they are important for the creative community, not merely an exhibition showing work to curious tourists.

"We should all try to affect the meaning of the terms which are important for us."(2). A year ago I registered the domain www.dontrunme.org, just in case :) +

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DEMOS – A SUB-GENRE OF MEDIA ART

Review by Perttu Rastas

The Finnish researcher and media artist Erkki Kurenniemi once said that if you want to know about the art of the future, you must study computer games. I'm sure he was not thinking about the content of the games, however, but three features that are now making multimedia a reality in art: real-time interfaces, multi-player environments and network technology.

Demos are like germs of digital ideas, proto-content produced just for the fun of it. They are not rudimentary games, digital videos, or music. They are independent works intimately connected with the evolving formats of media art. They are about testing the boundaries and potential of the machine within a chosen digital format. In that sense, demos are like the sketches visual artists make. Demo composers are mostly young people, beginners, self-seekers working under codenames, conscious of their own subculture, members of a community, who will sooner or later probably become actors in digital media culture in one way or another.

The book *Demoscene: The art of real-time* was produced in conjunction with the Demoscene exhibition held in Kiasma in 2003. Because it is still fairly young, research into demo culture is still in its infancy, whether conceptual or historical. But its correct context is media art. The story of the demo scene can be traced back to the Assembly events, organised for the 13th time this year, but the demo scene is more like a subculture of the movement, a root treatment. The history of the movement is also part of the young cultural history of computers, as each new generation of hardware enables better graphics, real-time display technology, and the emergence of a worldwide tribal culture mediated by the internet.

The editor of the book, demo activist Lassi Tasajärvi (http://www.katastro.fi/) has structured the book in two parts. In the first part, he recounts the history and roots of the demo scene. In the second, he uses a few case histories to illustrate what the demo scene is all about.

Because the history of computers, game consoles, software, and the games themselves is also the history of digital merchandise, demos constitute an interesting sideline in this broad field. Consoles and games are readymade, closed packages. Budding artists are not interested in ready-made stuff, however, but in how it really works and what other things might be done with it. This involves programming, the digital language of computers, its learning environment, and its re-use. Cracking the code of commercial products offered a suitably challenging field for the pubertal digital soul seeking its place in the community and environment. As a word, the "demo" concept comes from "demonstration". It implies coming out of one's room, demonstrating acquired skills, and comparing them with others sharing the same inclination. It is more about showing off than showing up. But we could also see the movement as an element in the early infancy of the social field of media art, or even its history in a very specific sense, and study the scene now from its own perspective, to understand it from within, as Lassi Tasajärvi and his friends do in the book. +

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Riikka Matala

Seven Mile Boots: A Piece of Intelligent Clothing, a Sign of Movement, an Entrance to the Virtual

"…although one knows that the boots are lurking into others' conversations… one is easily filled with the idea that the boots are talking to 'me'…"

– Laura Beloff

To the viewer artworks made up of items of clothing or accessories are open to a variety of interpretations. In the art-exhibition context the viewer experiences them as artworks with their own message. Clothes or accessories, nevertheless, also convey a message of their 'own' that is separate from the art context, and which viewers interpret via their acquired culture according to the rules they have learned. When an article of clothing or accessory that is part of an artwork is technologised as well, i.e. it is a piece of intelligent clothing, the scope for interpretation is even more varied, since technology brings with it the concomitant expectations, conceptions and experiences. This kind of artwork is thus defined as belonging in several categories, or in none. This is the case with *Seven Mile Boots*, which is the result of a collaboration between Laura Beloff, Erich Berger and Martin Pichlmair, and which combines clothing, technology and art's role as a thought-provoker and trend-setter. This makes the work interesting and challenging in its very definition, both for the viewer who experiences it and for its makers themselves.

Seven Mile Boots
as a Piece of Intelligent Clothing

Seven Mile Boots can be understood as a piece of intelligent clothing, since it comprises a pair of interactive footware with audio. Intelligent clothing, which has been called the new gen-

eration in clothes, is in fact defined, for example, according to researcher on wearable technologies Professor Jukka Vanhala, as meaning an item of clothing to which has been added electronics and intelligent textiles, or combinations of them. Thus, either new features are created for clothing or existing ones are improved.(1) From a clothing designers' viewpoint the aim is to incorporate new and necessary features into clothes so that the nature of the clothing is not radically altered. The new intelligent features are embedded into the clothing so that they are easily accessible to the user or then they work entirely autonomously, in which case the user does not need to be aware of them.

In intelligent clothing electronics refers, for example, to embedding the technology for a mobile phone into clothing using conductive fibres and more traditional electronic components. Meanwhile, intelligent textile materials refer, for example, to shape memory materials and phase change materials.(2) These materials are also called interactive materials, because, for instance, they react to changes in the temperature in either the user or their environment, in which case they are used to try, for example, to maintain the user's temperature balance, cooling them down and warming them up as necessary.

Possible application areas for intelligent clothing that we can mention are personal health and well-being, leisure and professional use. Applications related to health and safety frequently involve the monitoring of bodily functions, for example, with a pulse meter. Examples of entertainment variants could be communication equipment, games played with the aid of or

built into the garment, or other entertainment functions, such as listening to music with a device immersed into a garment. Professional applications often involve the integration into an item of clothing of a communication system needed at the workplace, or increasing the comfort and safety of a garment using new material-technology inventions, such as improving heat-resistance using new, intelligent materials. The functions associated with different application areas often overlap and the starting point for a design could be that the garment property being developed is to be a solution that transcends the concept, so that it can be embedded in garments intended for a wide variety of practical situations.

Despite the years of research and development, there are only a few actual items of intelligent clothing on the market, since the technologies being developed are still expensive and complicated to implement. What are on offer to consumers are several devices known as 'wearable technology', specifically things like pulse meters or mobile phones. They can be thought of as intermediate phases, which will ultimately end up being features of clothing, with, for example, the garment itself becoming the device that measures the pulse or the communication system that works like a mobile phone.

The development of wearable computers has also come a long way. In them the idea is to be able to implement in wearable form a computer with a headmounted display in the user's field of vision, plus the accompanying peripheral equipment, in which case the computer can also serve as an assistant-like device for monitoring the environment. Or it can even

be used to create an extended reality, in which case the display provides extra information about the surrounding world in symbols or text appearing in the wearer's visual field.

The difference between a piece of intelligent clothing and a wearable computer is that, generally, with intelligent clothing an attempt is made to make it by adding some new feature, in which case its status as an item of clothing is not significantly reduced. Meanwhile, wearable computers are a matter of distributing computer devices around the body, in which case the design is usually very much device-driven, as opposed to garment-driven.(3)

Yet, to me, Beloff, Berger and Pichlmair's *Seven Mile Boots* is not a wearable computer, since the use of the technology occurs normally when using the boots, i.e. when walking, and the technology has somehow been embedded into the boots, and nor have the boots solely been used simply as a platform for installing the necessary equipment into the clothes. The idea of the boots is that someone can wear the boots, walk around like a flâneur, simultaneously in both the physical world and the literal world of the Internet. Someone walking in the physical world might suddenly encounter a group of people chatting in real time in the virtual world. This chat is heard as spoken text coming from the boots. Wherever they are with the boots, the physical and the virtual worlds will merge.(4)

When assembling the artwork, however, the workgroup did not choose boots as the user interface so as to make an intelligent piece of clothing or a utility product that would generally be a part of every-

day life. Boots were a natural choice, because they wanted to create a work that would allow a human being physically, moving around in a real space, to travel in a (literal) space generated from an Internet text. The technical choices made also led them to choose a platform to which things can be fixed without going into overt product development, which is beyond the scope of an artistic budget.

Seven Mile Boots as a Piece of Art

Seven Mile Boots is a media artwork that is displayed in an art-exhibition context. For this reason the viewer can easily reject the boots' fundamental purpose as a physical means for moving around, and their symbolic value as a signifier of motion evidently emerges as a defining factor. In that case, their functionality, aestheticality or expressiveness, via which it is natural to define the functionality of utility garments in the situation in which they are used, are not relevant. The work as it is brought into the art-exhibition context thus displaces the work's basic significance as a component of attire.

According to Susan Kaiser, who has researched the social psychology of clothing, we are accustomed to thinking of clothes routinely, as something self-evident, in an almost unconscious way. Only if our attention is attracted to them do we realise that we analyse them. As everyday objects and as a topic of research, clothes are a part of both the public and the personal. Culture can prompt people to think in various ways about clothes, as a result of their different backgrounds and experiences.(5) That is why what remains a message in the language of clothes that is read on an uncon-

scious level in everyday life is foregrounded in the art context, when it can be difficult to relate to. In all its visibility clothing is something so invisible that when it is brought into the 'wrong' place and its meaning systems are mixed up with languages understood as art, the artwork 'speaks' the language of art with the accent of the clothes that it incorporates.

As Beloff puts it, the artwork in question is also a study of art's media in themselves. To her, clothing has traditionally been assigned to the category of 'design', and not 'fine art'. To her, that is why the work remains 'hanging' between the two categories, and is not defined as either. At the same time, if the category of media art and the so-called 'technological layer', which makes the article of clothing an entrance into a virtual world, are still present in the work, then assigning a category is even more complicated. Beloff cites Nicolas Bourriaud's idea that art is not a matter of creating something new, but of how things that already exist can be re-arranged. By using something that already exists we also mix together various meanings, and thus we create a new work that opens up to the viewer as something meaningful, as the artwork *Seven Mile Boots* undoubtedly does.

An Entrance into the Virtual

Clothing in the traditional sense is seen as a layer between the human body and the material environment. It gives its user new possibilities for exploring the world, for example, outdoor clothing makes it possible for warm-blooded human beings to cope in an extremely harsh winter environment. Intelligent clothing further changes this traditional way of see-

ing clothing. Intelligent clothing is not just a layer, but becomes more of a function in itself due to its new features.

Beloff takes this idea even further and adds that, with the *Seven Mile Boots*, the layer becomes more of a hole into the virtual, rather than a frontier. The virtual world is accessed in a natural way that actually requires no special effort. In a way, clothing is no longer a layer between the individual and the environment, but an entrance into another reality.

This shift also means that the boots seem to click in people's imaginations. They activate and open up people's minds to larger-scale thinking.

The artist herself puts it like this: "Myself, I can see, that the boots are limited and 'not-perfect', but the public does not seem to be stuck on that aspect. Instead the imagination and thinking seem to start from the boots. They are a kind of a starting point or trigger for a stream of thought. People start creating ideas of what the boots could-be-doing or thinking about where they would like to use them."

This way – as in *Seven Mile Boots* – of using intelligent clothing as a 'pointer' to expose major issues in the information society in general, like communication between people on the internet and also the issue of (a kind of) voyeurism, is an interesting and logical way to use intelligent clothing.

A Bit More

Technologies, especially communications technologies, alter our conceptions of the limits of our consciousness by offering the user an extension of mind and body. That which now appears new, for example, in the context

of media art, will in the future undeniably be transposed into our everyday lives, as well. That is why media artworks are in their own way signposts to the future and test laboratories with which viewers or users can test out and develop their views on the merging of technology and the human being.

Seven Mile Boots at a stroke give visibility to technology embedded in clothing, even though with intelligent clothing the intention is to make the technology a part of the clothes, so there is not necessarily any need to be aware of its existence. This work, meanwhile, is more of a personal assistant than a mute, invisible interface that can be used to visit Internet chat rooms. Using the boots offers a new and different bodily entrance into a virtual world. Added to that, the boots give their user a seven-mile stride, allowing them to move around in the virtual world, extending their conception of the world by moving only a few steps in physical space.

This is what intelligent clothing in general does. It exists in some degree of interaction with its user, even generating in its user a feeling of companionship with it. According to its features, intelligent clothing either protects its user from the world, shutting it outside the body, or, on the other hand, it can also be an entrance into worlds to which its user would otherwise have no access. It can be either, but nevertheless they both make you a bit more. +

(1) Vanhala, 2001, 151.
(2) Tao, 2001, 3 – 5.
(3) Lehikoinen, 2002, 26.
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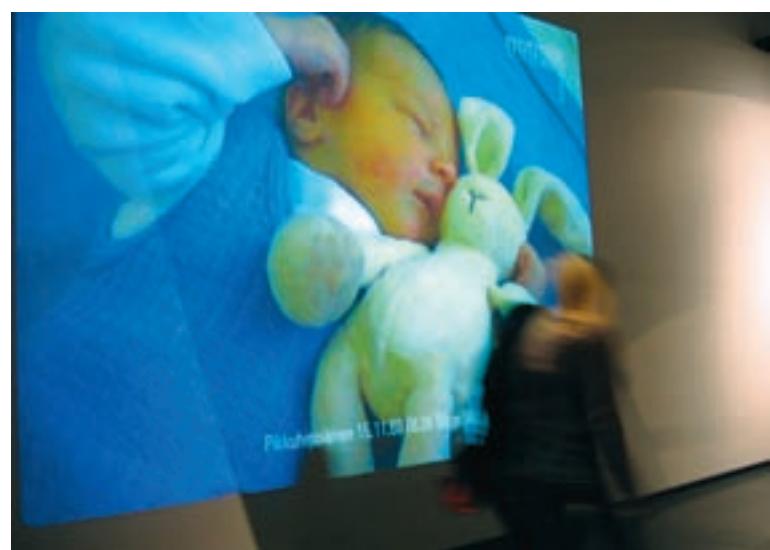
Minna Tarkka Heidi Tikka: Mobile Exposures and Social Fabrics

For years, Finland has been projected as a laboratory for the wireless society, but surprisingly few media artists have made projects using mobile technology. So it is all the more welcome that new work in this area has been presented by Heidi Tikka, whose practice as an artist and researcher has engaged deeply with issues of visuality, distance, and affectivity in relation to new technology.

Educated both in fine arts and textile design, Heidi Tikka has addressed the embodied, haptic and textural aspects of visual technologies and user interfaces. Her new work with mobile imaging emphasises the affective dimensions of daily life and presents experiments in exposing and re-weaving social fabrics. The pieces probe the interface between the private and the public by subtly manipulating the time and space of experience, in negotiations with a multitude of social and technical actors.

Situating the Viewer

A key theme in Tikka's work has been the situatedness of visual practices – the spatial structures and visual technologies that define the viewer's position. Having problematised the gallery and the photographic image as spaces for viewing in installations of the 1990's, in her later work Tikka has questioned the social spaces and situations created by interactive and mobile communications.

While her early work explored media-archeological and psychoanalytic topics such as the relation of photographic and cinematographic technologies to visual desire, a turning point in Tikka's work was marked by her becoming a mother. Since then, her son

Severi has acted as both object and subject-collaborator in her productions. Simultaneously the work has become grounded in situations of everyday life.

Mother, Child (2000) invited exhibition visitors to participate in the experience of cradling and feeding a virtual infant (video clips of Severi), projected into the arms of the spectator. Mediated by camera sensors and algorithms, the image of the baby responds to the movements of both the user and the people in the surrounding space. On sudden movements by the user or when there are too many people in the room, the child will become restless and start to cry; on gentle rocking, it will fall asleep.

The powerful intimacy of the situation, combined with the ephemerality and unpredictability of the projected child, contribute to a strong emotional engagement with the piece: the user is exposed to the situation and finds it impossible to keep a distance. By locating this type of private event in the public space of the gallery, *Mother, Child* also poses questions about the social dimensions of care. In most successful instances, the piece initiates collaborations between the user and other visitors to make the baby feel happy again.

Exposures of
Time, Space and Mobility

The social, participatory context of interaction introduced in *Mother, Child* is developed further in Heidi Tikka's recent mobile experiments. In them, the space addressed is no longer the enclosed space of a museum or gallery, but that of mobile, globally connected everyday life.

In marketing imagery, mobility is posited as a new kind of freedom, a disembodied experience of riding the airwaves, free from the constraints of time and space. But what kind of freedom, and whose freedom is in question? By foregrounding the experience of families with small children, Tikka's mobile pieces expose the limits of mobility and propose ways of using wireless imaging to break up the triangular space of home, work and the daycare center. A key tactic in breaking the constraints of this space is based on the way mobile devices are used for being present elsewhere, in other people's lives – via immediate situations, feelings and thoughts communicated in SMS or MMS messages. But despite the ubiquitous 'anytime, anywhere' possibility of communicating, mobile messages always also involve a very specific somewhere and sometime, and this specificity of experience is what Tikka wants to convey.

The Imaginary Journey (2003) is a fictional journey of a mother and son, presented in the form of a web-based photographic travelogue. The itinerary was constructed through a collaborative process, in which friends from abroad were invited to contribute materials for an imagined visit to their city. The series of images presented in the travelogue thus depict fictive visits to Berlin, Riga, London and Amsterdam intertwined with the activities of the mother and son, who throughout the journey actually remain in their home city of Helsinki. While pointing out the limits to mobility, the piece also proposes a new type of a geographic imaginary, the ability to be present in other places and lives while remaining immobile.

This practice of subtly manipulating the spatio-temporal aspects of mobile representation was continued in the *Situations* project (2003-). In the *Situations* series, the emphasis is on the temporal aspects of experience: the time stamp that accompanies every MMS message is used as a key structural element to order the narrative and provides an organising principle for the interface.

In *Situations*, mobile cameras are used to depict and share moments in family life. These moments may be unique and important, such as giving birth in *Syntymiä* (*Births*), or everyday family occurrences as in *Perheitä* (*Families)*. The mobile camera images are collected into a database on the internet, where they are arranged in chronological order for browsing. Interestingly, the experience of browsing the images with the time 'slider' introduces an almost statistical, defamiliarizing element into the presentation. The uniqueness of the parents' first encounter with their newborns, and the repetitive rhythms of daily family life are made visible by the standardizing elements of the user interface.

In 2004, *Situations* was further developed into a game-like project, *Situations4x*, in which 3 families improvise and play around summery themes. Here the temporal sequence is manipulated so that the connection of any particular event with a certain date is broken and replaced by a thematic connection. In the space of the audiovisual presentation, consisting of 4 screens, the families thus live together the variations on an imaginary summer's day in August 2004. Besides letting the families share their situations, the small, constructed narratives pres-

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Heidi Tikka is a teacher and researcher at the Media Lab in the University of Art and Design Helsinki. She is currently preparing a doctoral dissertation on media art. In 2004, AVEK, the Promotion Centre for Audiovisual Culture, awarded Heidi Tikka their new annual €12,000 AVEK Prize.

Previous page, left: Heidi Tikka, *Imaginary Journey*, participatory online project, travel pictures from an imagined trip in Amsterdam, June 6, 2003. Photos by Baas Raijmakers and Heidi Tikka. Web designer Giedre Kligyte.

Previous page, right: Heidi Tikka, *Births*, mobile service experiment, mms messages, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, 2003. Photo by Heidi Tikka

Heidi Tikka, *Mother, Child*, interactive video projection, *F2F*, New Wight Gallery at UCLA, Los Angeles, 2000. Photo by Martin Cox.

ent first-person accounts of events, their immediate, sensory characteristics further emphasized by the fleeting capture and image resolution of the mobile camera. And again, both the universality and specificity of experiences is brought out for the viewer.

Work through Connectedness

In the *Situations4x* installation from 2004, images of three families are presented side by side. But there is also a fourth screen, reserved for the audience's own images. This exemplifies media art's turn from interactive to participatory forms of work, where the users not only consume the representation, but are also invited to become its producers. For the artist, this implies a change of role from being an author or 'content producer' to a moderator of sociotechnical situations.

Besides the cooperation with programmers in creating a common language and the specifications for technical realisation, user interfaces and experiences, the labour of media art always involves negotiations with other team members, hardware manufacturers, and so on. Not to speak of the art-world representatives, for whom showcasing new media projects usually presents a challenge. The art-world partner for *Situations* was Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, which has world-class expertise and infrastructure for displaying media art. The technical design was orchestrated through a subcontracting deal with Grip Studios Interactive, where Aki Kivelä and Olli Lyytinen not only implemented the design, but also contributed significantly to the development of the interface concept.

In *Situations*, the negotiations also reach beyond the art and technology worlds to a variety of social partnerships. Especially in *Births*, where intimate moments were made public on the Internet and projected in urban space, special care had to be taken in engaging the participating families and the maternity-clinic staff who acted as guides to the families' mobile-imaging process.

The fact that the Finnish teleoperator Radiolinja was interested in what a working media artist could contribute to service development introduced another dimension – that of the market - to this already complex, nested set of partnerships. Creating presentations for business meetings, framing the project's potential applications for extending the market potential of mobile services became inevitable aspects of the production process.

It is obvious that in these types of projects, the artist occupies a very delicate position of translator between a variety of interests and perspectives. Heidi Tikka sees this 'connectedness' as an essential element in the production networks of media arts practice. The hybridity of her positions in these networks – as a mother, as an artist, researcher and developer – also adds to the ethical reflexivity and sensitivity of her work. +

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	Computer games created by students of
	digital culture /Turku University
19.3.–29.5.2005	Ilkka Lammi (1976-2000)
	Heavy Snowflakes
	Miklos Gaál, Jari Haanperä, Tellervo Kalleinen,
	Anu Pennanen and Mika Taanila /Producer: Frame

Raumars Artist-in-residence hosts:
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ative work of exceptional quality.

PRIZEWINNERS
1991-2004 . . . .

1991	Maaria Wirkkala	Finland
1992	Johan Scott	Finland
1993	Per Kirkeby	Denmark
1994	Olegs Tillbergs	Latvia
1996	Silja Rantanen	Finland
1997	Pauno Pohjolainen	Finland
1998	Peter Frie	Sweden
1999	Markus Copper	Finland
2000	Hreinn Fridfinnsson	Iceland
2001	Heli Hiltunen	Finland
2002	Heli Rekula	Finland
2003	Anu Tuominen	Finland
2004	Kimmo Schroderus	Finland
2005	Nominations will be published	
	in December 2004	

Features and Interviews

Eija-Liisa Ahtila (born 1958) is one of today's major innovators in visual expression. Her films tour the world's film festivals and her installations are shown in the most important international exhibitions.

Ahtila was initially a painter, something that is still evident in her work. She started making films at the beginning of the 1990s, combining more traditional elements of visual art, a painterly use of colour, and an artistic distance from documentaristic narrative and dialogue. She was named Finnish Young Artist of the Year in 1990, and an exhibition made up of her image projections and dialogues was shown at Kluuvi Gallery in Helsinki and Pori Art Museum in 1991.

Framework is now publishing an article by Eija-Liisa Ahtila from 1991. In an interview with Paula Toppila the artist revisits her thoughts on the definition of identity from a present-day perspective. In his article, Jonni Roos investigates Eija-Liisa Ahtila's approach to filmic narrative.

Charles Sandison (born 1969) lives and works in Tampere, Finland. Originally from Scotland, he studied at the Glasgow School of Art, graduating in 1993. As well as participating in exhibitions at home and abroad, he is also currently visiting professor at the National Studio of Contemporary Arts, France.

Since moving to Finland ten years ago, Sandison has worked mainly with computer-generated video projections that combine language, form, architecture, and movement.

His metaphorical works are frequently based on opposites. Things that strive towards antithetical goals – words, letters, signs or symbols – try to win and expand their own space and to block the others' success. This results in captivating suspense dramas, in which alongside computer-aided events, chance always has its own potential for affecting the progress of events.

Salla Tykkä (born 1973) has received a lot of attention internationally following her appearance at the 2001 Venice Biennial, where her 35 mm colour film *Lasso* (2000) was shown in the *Plateau of Humankind* exhibition curated by Harald Szeemann.

Tykkä's work can be seen as extended self-portraiture. Her six finished films, all loaded with tensions, some playing with cinematic methods used in horror films, are better known than her photographs, which again concentrate on the life of a young female protagonist. *My hate is useless* (1996) is based on a poem that Tykkä wrote when she was suffering from anorexia. *Bitch – Portrait of The Happy One* (1979) is a parody of TV advertisements and faked glamour. Meanwhile, *Power* (1999) shows a fight: a shirtless young woman and a big man boxing. This is a statement of opposition to the power relations in our society, but it can also be seen as a symbolic battle for life and survival through it.

In this issue Francis McKee examines Salla Tykkä's latest set of video works, the *Cave* trilogy, including *Lasso, Thriller* and *Cave* from 2000-2003.

Minna Långström (born 1974) is currently working with interactive animation. She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts Helsinki in 2002 with her video installation *Drawn to you*, in which a viewer steps on a glowing pad on the floor to activate a video of a peacock being drawn. Her next video installation *The Chinese Room* (2003), is a masterly interactive video animation depicting a futuristic society, in which video surveillance by computers is a natural part of people's daily lives.

In this issue Tapio Mäkelä discusses Minna Långström's *Drawn to You* and *The Chinese Room*. Långström's *Bubble* was premiered at the Avanto Festival in Helsinki in November 2004. The artist discusses the themes of this recent work with Susanna Paasonen.

Eija-Liisa Ahtila in Conversation with Paula Toppila (September 15, 2004)

The Golden Age of the Moving Image

Paula Toppila (PT): Certain social questions, and in the early phase even direct statements of opinion on current events, news and news reporting, have constituted a thread running through your artistic work right from the start (for example, *Short Cultural-Political Quadrille (*1988), made with Maria Ruotsala, *The Tender Trap* (1991) and *Doing it* (1992)). To what extent do you see your work as an artist now as social or political?

Eija-Liisa Ahtila (E-LA): Well, I haven't really thought that much has changed, if I think about my own attitude to making the works and to their content. A work should have something that speaks to people and which is related to what is happening around me, to the reality in which I live. Something that presents a challenge.

But the other thing is this idea of the political and the way its meaning has changed in art and more generally. I am thinking here, for instance, of the relationship between the real and the fictive. Nowadays it is actually impossible to shatter the illusion created by the work in the same way as, say, Godard did – e.g. by having an actor, right in the middle of the story, direct a speech to the camera, straight at the viewer. Something is happening, of course – but what? The question is how can you interrupt the story or the flow of fiction when we live in the kind of political reality that only a few years ago would have looked like a complete fiction – in a reality where on the TV

news the leader of the British Labour Party smiles together with a conservative-Republican President of the USA.

In any case, the political nature of the message is always linked to the context, and perhaps nowadays more so than ever before. This does not, of course, rule out making statements of opinion or reacting directly. But it does also mean different kinds of messages in different situations, and taking this into account. As a visual artist, taking social action with my own medium, i.e. the moving image, is different from if I were e.g. a TV foreign correspondent. The main thing is having a command of the language of the moving image and expressing something with it (and preferably renewing it). The message does not get through best by a character speaking a line of dialogue containing a social message – what may perhaps be needed most is to get the light, sound, rhythm and the character role to work together. And, on the other hand, of course, this is always tied up with the relationship between the private and the political – between the unconscious and the political. This is perhaps more an area for artworks.

You mentioned *Short Cultural-Political Quadrille.* At the time, we made it as a comment on the discussion about the building of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki. This institution, which was being planned at the time, and was talked about using the general name 'museum of modern art'. *Quadrille* questioned the concept of a 'museum

of modern art' by giving it a history. Dressed as waiters (standing on Aalto armchairs) we went through the history of the museum institution: the function of the museum at different times, starting with the Alexandria museum and going on to Berlin's Altes Museum, which somehow epitomised the concept of the modern museum. It also used photographic slides and other paraphernalia…

PT: Even though most of your film installations are familiar to the public from exhibition contexts, you have, for a long time, also been making works for other media, particularly for showing on television. You mentioned *Me/We, Okay, Gray,* 1993 and *Present*, 2001 which were designed as spots to be shown on television. Why is it important to you to make these kinds of works?

E-LA: The exhibition context is an interesting issue. Not only in terms of the question of whether the works are displayed in museums, but rather, more generally of the conventions created by the situation and mode of display and, on the other hand, the possibilities they create for acting in a different way. Because my means of expression is the moving image, it is natural that I think about its various formats and environments. Multi-image installations test out how a story is told in a space with several images. On the other hand, I am also interested in the tradition of film and how

Right: Eija-Liisa Ahtila and Maria Ruotsala, *A Short Cultural-Political Quadrille*, 1988, performance, slideshow.

Below: Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *Me/We; Okay*; *Gray*, 1993, 35 mm film and DVD installation for 3 monitors with sound, 3 x approx. 90 sec. Photo by Marja-Leena Hukkanen. © Crystal Eye Ltd, Helsinki. Courtesy of Klemens Gasser & Tanja Grunert Inc, New York.
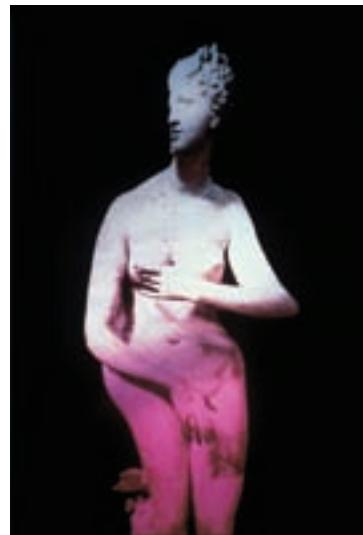
things can be told differently in it. Or, for example, the conventions of advertising. When I did *Me/We, Okay, Gray*, the starting point was the effects that the narratives of adverts and the short film have on each other. I wanted to try something else out in the place that is always reserved for the adverts, how the display site affects the work, and vice versa.

PT: In an article published in 1991 (*Kuva*, ["Image"] published in *Nuori Taide,* ["Young Art"], ed. Seppo Heiskanen) you proposed that Finns who are worried about their identity should be pleased with the situation, in which the precise definition of the boundaries begins to be uninteresting. At the same time, you say there is no such thing as an original without a copy, and so we have to make an image out of ourselves. Do you feel that it

is still possible or necessary for us to stand out as a nation in international art arenas?

E-LA: It goes on in any case. Often, people want me to appear as a Finnish artist, as a representative of Finland. Perhaps no longer in continental Europe or the USA, but, for example, in Japan, in South America… It is also a good way to polemicise and pose questions, such as what is ultimately actually Finnish in the works, what transcends the boundaries of nationality – the kind of thing that makes a Japanese women come red and fuming out of an installation wanting to say something that I don't understand because I don't understand her language.

In the works people speak Finnish and they are subtitled – preferably in the language of the country where they are being shown, if there is

enough cash, or if not then in English. I think it is good to hear Finnish – it reminds people of difference. It is essential to be linked to your own background.

As regards the text you mention, I wrote it when I had for the first time spent an extended period living outside of Finland – a year in London – and having returned home.

Has anything really changed in 13 years? It feels like we too rarely allow anything new to happen, or anything to change. Again, people talk of internationalism, but always somehow within Finland, on our own terms. Nor have I ever heard of the artist and the work being allowed to take a central position in this process. Nor do people talk about things that have already expanded the scope for Finnish art, such as, e.g. AVEK's [The Promotion Centre for Audiovisual

Culture] support for the art of the moving image.

People try more to find various kinds of new strategies for 'selling the product'. Perhaps this is essential, say, in pop music, but in visual art it doesn't work. The scene is too limited, the systems there ready, the power in use, the history and the contexts known – except for in Finland. And here we again come up against that navel-gazing – internationalism is out there somewhere, where we are going. It could be appropriate to be international here right now, to produce more exhibitions and works from elsewhere for Finland, to talk about what kind of context the works arose in, why some artists or works get prizes, what is the history of this visual-art thinking – why things happen this way. This kind of analysis could help shake off the suspicion felt about visual art and the idea that all artists vague-

Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *Consolation Service*, 1999,
35mm film, DVD installation, 23`40, 1:1.85,
Dolby Surround. © Crystal Eye Ltd, Helsinki.

ly try to entertain themselves in their studios and that success is – if not entirely, then at least to a great extent – a matter of chance, just like international success. Nevertheless, just like, say, medical research, visual art has its own history/ies, in which Finnish artists are either situated or not. I would like to think that, in particular, this is also linked with the international relevance of the works.

The best assistance here could be open visual art organisations that are able to react to existing international networks and to make mutual exchanges.

PT: How would you carry on the analysis of present-day Finland's situation that you began above and in the text from 1991? It seems like official Finland has always been worried about its identity even though among the younger generation of artists this is no longer the case. If something has changed it is this generation of artists, they are not interested in Finnish identity, or rather, they do what they do and internationalism is natural to them, possibly via studies or residencies abroad.

E-LA: I believe that it is going in precisely that direction, but when they come back, – how ready are people to accept the different pictures that they make? I cannot talk about that generation's experience, but for sure the framework is no longer at the point it was when they left. We should simply accept this, i.e. the change in the image reflected back at us, and the way that these images are not one but many.

Perhaps it would also be worth mentioning that the division between different areas in art – painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography and media art – is entirely unnecessary. From the point of view of the reception of art the medium is inconsequential – for the artist, it is of consequence during the fabrication process, but not for the viewer. Maintaining differences within the visual arts like this is questionable. It is impossible to evaluate a work and its meaning by taking the medium as the starting point. This, nevertheless, is still kept up in schools, in professional unions and via the giving of prizes for visual art. This is not just a Finnish phenomenon, but a Nordic one. What makes this strange is specifically the way that a very powerful shift has occurred in the visual arts in the Nordic countries since the end of the 1990s: Nordic

video art and moving-image installations have been at the centre of international art and, at the same time, attracted attention to the entire realm of art. This has not, however, been received with rejoicing – just the opposite: schools and unions have not given up the divisions, and the various prize institutions have only slowly taken these ways of making things into account, and are still marginalising them. Take, for example, the Swedish/Nordic Carnegie Art Award. The prize was announced in *Helsingin Sanomat* under the headline: "The World's Biggest Art Award". That isn't strictly the case, only something of the sort, this is an award solely for painting. This restriction leaves out the majority of interesting Nordic art. Do they somehow want to help painting, or why do it in this situation? One great solution devised by the award panel has been to give prizes to the same people in several different years. (The award is handed out every other year, and before 2002 every year).

Nevertheless, in recent years, representatives of photography and video and installation have also been chosen for the lower prize placings. So, when I was asked to send images from my works for the competition,

I didn't know whether the criteria had changed. I asked about this: "I know that Carnegie started as an award for paintings and painters, but since I was invited there must be a reason which I'm not aware of. My approach to visual arts is that the value of the artwork does not arise from the medium with which it is executed. In that sense all art is equal. But on the other hand the process of making the work, the distance between an idea and the finished work, is everything that actually makes the work what it really is. Because of this I hope you won't look at my works from the point of view of a painting. If this nevertheless is necessary, please do not include my works in the competition." I got the response that the content of the prize has not changed, but the participants themselves get to define what painting is, in other words, whether they and their works are included or not.

The same contradiction exists in Finland, too. On the one hand, we are proud of the new technology that is developed here, while, on the other hand, there is a desire in art to go back to the turn of the 20th Century to the likes of the Gallen-Kallelas, Edelfelts and Schjerfbecks – to the Golden Age of Finnish painting. +

Eija-Liisa Ahtila

Image (1991)

There are large numbers of people who live in a New World that is situated somewhere between translations made from one language to another. This place is called either Space or Place, it is hard to say, since the people there mostly speak English, but pronounce it so differently or so badly that it is hard to understand what they are actually saying.

Such ambiguity and vagueness is typical of this place, and, on the other hand, we can say that they are only apparent, as it is such an essential feature of the place that if this uncertainty were removed, it would eliminate the whole situation. There, we are in a position where the existence of two (or more) Gods becomes increasingly clear, in a situation where the paradox of the guarantors of many correct, multiple meanings destroys the meaning itself.

Another characteristic of this place is that people are not very interested in defining permanent borders, or in determining what/who belongs there and what is external. In a situation such as Pl/Sp/ace, what is still important is people's individual identity – in other words, the active creation of everything that people want to identify with.

Finns are people who live in Finland. This definition is relatively accurate, as there are very few people who have moved to Finland from elsewhere. Finnish nationality or a 100% lifelong residency within the country's borders is not, however, a sufficient guarantee of 'Finnishness', because the discussion of and distinction between the Finnish and its opposite is mainly done between Finns of the above-mentioned variety. This implies that observing Finns will not necessarily reveal the true nature of Finnishness, and, on the other hand, it also suggests that there are different grades and levels of Finnishness. The most interesting thing, however, is the way it brings out cultural connections by talking about the fundamental principle of the absence of conflict in Western thought, about polarisation, about working with opposites, about the inevitability of accentuating what is right and of marginalising the rest. The concept of Finnishness has been seen and put to work according to this very principle:

The concept of Finnishness is used as an entity that is unchanging either temporally or in tone. This concept is bounded by its opposite, which is the entirety of what things are like elsewhere. This is a similar, albeit considerably larger, homogenous whole. The function of these dichotomies is to separate Finnishness from everything that surrounds it, or attaches itself to it from the outside. Polarisations create an illusion of order, hierarchy, and coherence. This preservation of Finnishness is a battle both against the other and within the system itself so that unity can be maintained in a situation where the very impossibility of the absolute right is a threat.

More often than others we have ourselves used Finnishness in negative portrayals and spoken of backwardness, of theft or of some other character flaw, such as intolerance, envy or lack of self-confidence. Although we have more often seen ourselves in a negative light, this negativity is not a permanent Finnish quality. I think people find it so difficult to appear content in public perhaps because positivity and criticality seem to be irreconcilable opposites. The reasons for this are the mannerisms of criticality, in which criticality has come to mean creating problems simply in order to solve them, or according to which the only satisfied person is a blind member of the bourgeoisie who, unlike vigilant members of the working class, does not notice the problems. The more, and more quickly, someone notices shortcomings and problems, the more vigilant, more intelligent and more critical he/she is. Lack of self-confidence is just as likely to arouse attention as an admirable attentiveness to one's surroundings and sensitivity in a crowd, in which everyone wants to explain to the rest as many pearls of wisdom as time allows.

Thus, nothing forces us to see Finnishness as a series of misfortunes. Rather, we could imagine it as inspiring the exact opposite. We have an interesting history, and it is fun to take pride in both our Eastern and Western influences, or to display our old landscape painters' visions of Finnish nature and culture. It is a relief that as a citizen of a small nation there is no need to have a bad conscience about questionable mil-

itary actions that our country has taken against others. It is good to have been able to live in a Scandinavian welfare state where it is possible as a child to develop a basic confidence or, on the other hand, because of this, to demand more from oneself; it is a positive matter that relations with other countries are so good, that there is little pollution and that there is space, and that there are no signs of various forms of suffering and abuse everywhere.

Because national identity is an idea to which we ourselves give meaning, why shouldn't we make Finnishness an ideal – an image that we can then copy in ourselves? We should do this, if only because 'copying' might possibly be a distinctively Finnish quality. In various publications I have often come across articles in which professionals from various fields have been accused of adopting ideas and solutions that originate from abroad, and also because this happens so easily. The point of this kind of criticism is often that something that is copied is never the Finn's own and that it consequently cannot be Finnish, and ultimately that a copy always remains somehow less and superfluous as compared with the original.

Because Finnishness is an idea that changes as Finland changes (just as Finland changes as the world changes) we are still and constantly in a situation in which we struggle to recognise ourselves and the other, what belongs and what is outside, what is real and what is surface representation, wholeness and dissolution.

Although we live in a 1990s western media society of rapid communications and the torrent of information (or from another point of view, specifically because of it), how can we be certain, despite our sincerity, that our thoughts and actions are Finnish? What if, when creating Finnish works of art without existing models we are unwittingly copying a work or culture that we do not know exists? On the other hand, if we know anything, we at least know that it is impossible to know everything. In that case, Finnishness would be dependent either on ignorance or on pure chance.

On the other hand, it may also be the case that an act or an idea is completely Finnish, but that the interpret-

er has a tendency to see things in a homogenising fashion. In other words he/she, misled by his/her own narrow-mindedness, puts equal signs between unequal things. From this point of view 'Finnishness' is more dependent on those who define it than on the properties of the objects themselves.

It is also possible, and very common, to try to anchor Finnishness in the history of our country. In this case, new works that remind us of or resemble Finnish national masterpieces are seen as being Finnish. But what if a new work resembles an earlier one that has so far unjustly received limited attention? On the other hand, if these thoughts or acts draw on our history more generally – on the history of our politics, economics, culture or history – how can we be certain that we are not faced with a case of Swedishness, Russianness, Germanness or Estonianness? Because of our various historical and cultural connections, finding some kind of pure Finnishness in this way is a desperate task.

Finnishness seems to stand on shaky ground. We should be pleased about that. Perhaps the quest for totality, unity and self-sufficiency that derives from polarisation is a contradiction in terms. The goal annihilates itself and the whole project: it is not internally homogenous, coherent or original. It exists specifically because of the existence of its opposite. Both include the other within themselves. What appears to be alien to the system is actually a part of it. Not something external that has attached itself to it later on, but something that has always been a structural, potential force within it.

It is worth our creating a picture of ourselves. Reality needs representation in order to reinforce the illusion that it is itself concordant with the truth. Our picture constructs its own reality by using its frame to put borders around unorganised reality so as to make it meaningful. The relationship between our picture and reality is like that between a copy and the original: the original does not exist until there is a copy of it – both jointly making each other. Our picture is not just the object of our gaze – it is also within us. The matter of representation-reality fills the space. +

Jonni Roos

Social Space Broken Down into Its Component Parts and Reassembled

Eija-Liisa Ahtila's filmic works investigate the marks that human relationships leave on individuals. Ahtila engages with her theme on multiple levels testing out the means of filmic narrative.

The fast-paced *ME/WE, OKAY, GRAY* cycle completed in 1993 comprises three approximately one-and-a-half-minute short films. The pictorial narrative borrows its form and rhythm from the aesthetic of television adverts. The facial expressions and gestures in advertising films parallel lines of dialogue uttered rapidly directly at the viewer, their content partly in contradiction with the visual images. In the work the structures of the narrative are dismantled into their parts and assembled in a surprising way. Ahtila has also unpacked the individuality of the characters appearing in the work: the voice of each of the people appearing here is swapped in the middle of the story with the other voices, and in *ME/WE* the man who is the main character appears for a moment as a double. The unreal feel of the stories is reminiscent of surrealist dream imagery. The lines of dialogue have been accelerated to such a furious pace that their function as a displacement action is accentuated: it is as though the mind were to generate a hysterical torrent of speech so as not to have to face the dark chasm below. The lines of dialogue combine various ingredients that, on the one hand, are linked with the life situation of the person in the story and the subjective dimensions of their mind and, on the other hand, with scientifically precise camerawork or other non-subjective content. The issue is, nevertheless, constantly one of the effect on the individual of the interactions between people. Although in the final section, the relationships between the people are, admittedly, seen in relation to the idea of an irreversible ending, nuclear catastrophe.

ME/WE, OKAY, GRAY takes to extremes the western experience industry's attempt to overcome the passage of time by making narratives that are like condensed time capsules. Imbibing such a capsule (I am not referring solely to enjoyment, but also simply to the mechanical performance) involves consuming or using up time (in the same sense as milk in cartons is consumed), in other words, a practice which has a dual goal: 1: to get your own time to be used up "more quickly" insofar as your own time is forgotten for a moment in the face of the fictive time provided by the work. 2: to get your own time to be used up "more slowly" insofar as by watching a film, reading a book, and so on you can perhaps gather more life experience than by staring for a corresponding time at the fridge door.

If 6 was 9 (1995), which deals with schoolgirls' sexuality, is noticeably slower in tempo than its predecessor. This ten-minute short film comes across as being more romantic than Ahtila's other works. The combination of piano music and rainy cityscapes with the text's sex talk teeming with odd little details creates the work's underlying contrast. In the texts attention is focused on the way that the girls' accounts of sexuality are firmly bound up with physical places and, on the other hand, also with physical bodily postures. The text charges the places shown in the pictures with unfulfilled sexual desire.

In this work Ahtila makes time deliberately vague: the viewpoint here, as in others of Ahtila's works, is retrospective, but the flimsiness of a single character in relation to time sets up an ambivalent time-space. What is a girl? According to *If 6 was 9*, a girl can be a 38-year-old former adult.

Today (1996/97) is a rhythmic, hypnotic study of human relationships. This ten-minute short film consists of three parts, which show a car accident from three different angles. The film breaks out of the correspondence between time and place: the different tenses in the text are mixed up with images from the past, the present, and perhaps of the future, too. Also, the identity of the film's characters remains subtly ambivalent: the son is a little too like his father, and besides that is himself a father. The daughter is both old and young.

The action mostly takes place in the characters' memories: its contradictoriness springs from the different individuals' disparate ways of making observations and of remembering details.

Consolation Service (1999) tells the story of a divorce. The 23-minute whole again comes in three parts. As in the previous work this too is about the mingling of everyday reality and fantasy. The story is told from the viewpoint of the woman who is getting divorced, but the author also brings out her own involvement in the story: from the characters' dialogue it emerges that they know the narrator. In the work's middle section dealing with the theme of death, fantasy is combined with speech that contains scientific facts about what happens when someone falls through weak ice. This scene is clearly related to the last part of *ME/WE, OKAY, GRAY.* The common factor in them is specifically the emphasis on scientific explanations in the face of death.

Love is a Treasure (2002) is a whole made up of five parts, and is considerably more extensive than the previous works. Its themes are the stories of women who have been through psychosis. In them Ahtila has particularly focussed her attention on the mingling of reality and illusion in these women's minds. Our attention is drawn to the way the origin of the psychological problems in these stories lies specifically in human relationships: in a cold mother, an abusive father or in school bullies. Nevertheless, Ahtila's interest appears to be, not in the origins of the problems, but in the strange worlds that reign in the women's minds.

Although there are mutual differences between Ahtila's works as regards theme and treatment, they nevertheless link in to become part of a highly consistent thematic field. We could take up any of the works mentioned previously for special examination, and say that it is highly representative of the whole of her output. The work that says most to me has been *Today*. It could be that in my case this simply springs from the fact that this entity depicting the relationships between a father, son and daughter serves as a surface for my own projections. In its relationship to time, *Today* is situated in the terrain between the rapid *ME/WE, OKAY, GREY* and the slow *Consolation Service.*

Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *Today*, 1996-1997, 35mm film and DVD installation for 3 projections with sound, 10`00. © Crystal Eye Ltd, Helsinki. Courtesy of Klemens Gasser & Tanja Grunert Inc, New York.

TODAY (1996/97)

In the first sequence a girl talks about her father crying because his own father had just been run over by a car in an accident on a dark forest road. The events appear to have bedevilled the girl right into adulthood, since in the second part an older woman tells of the fear she has retained in her body, and the reckless driving on the dark forest road seems to be mixed in with dream images. In the third part the girl's father talks about his own father and about his involvement in the accident.

After the first viewing, this story that has taken shape in my head, nevertheless, begins to break down. Something in the story simply does not add up.

A few tens of viewings later, I no longer dare to make any very definite assertions about this ten-minute work. One thing that is sure is that the work is divided into three parts, in each of which the events are viewed from a different angle. These parts, with their complex references, are linked together, but in places the references are contradictory and serve to disrupt the story developing in the viewer's head rather than supporting it.

The flow of time in the work further confuses the viewer. The characters speak about the events illogically both in the present and the imperfect, while also referring to future events.

The mingling of the real-feeling and the dream-like here has been done without clear boundaries, which prompts the question: Is there any 'true' (or on the other hand, any 'dream'), at all, in the work? Perhaps no actual accident took place?

I have ended up coming to this conclusion. All we are given is contradictory information about the accident assumed to be at the core of the work. The girl says that the father is weeping because the previous night a car ran over his own father, and that the car was going much too fast along the dark forest road. She does not say who was driving the car. The father, in turn, says that they had all set off for a night drive, towards their summer cottage, so they could go for a swim. Suddenly, from out of the shadow of one of the trees someone had stood up and an accident had happened "again".

Let us take that word "again", which flashes up in the man's sentence "and then, again, an accident happened" as a clue. Because if an accident happens again, then it has happened before, too. The words 'again' and 'accident' also come up in another context. The man says: "And he's [the father] talking to me again, saying "Your life is just drifting from one accident to another and you can't even decide [he says 'you can't even decide' three times] whether they've been good or bad."

What then is the accident that has happened? At the least it is something that happened between the man and his father. The Dad section begins with a sequence in which the grandfa-ther walks along the dark road towards the camera and then lies down on the ground, in the shadow of a black tree.

What literally happens? The father takes up a position across his son's path. The son is on an amusing joy-ride. Just before the collision the father stands up on the road. The situation appears fairly clear: the father is trying to forbid his son something by placing himself across his path. A collision occurs.

But what is the father forbidding his son to do?

The girl talks about the way the father and son are alike: they have the same first name, and the vertebrae protruding from the son's back are in exactly the same place as where the father's braces cross. The son cannot work, because if he does the kind of thing he should, his back starts aching so much that he cannot do anything other than sit and watch TV. So if the son enjoys something, what unites him with his father becomes painful. Let enjoyment be our next clue.

Enjoyment is referred to not only in the episode mentioned above, but also in what the man says about his father: "Behind my back he said to mother: 'lying is admitting your mistakes' and told her to spell the word PLEASURE". This is a bit odd, because the girl has said her grandfather was a complete miser, "in his heaven bread is cheaper than shit." Vera also talks about pleasure: "Pleasure is pornography or something petit bourgeois." And later: "People make love at least twice a week only because nobody wants to feel ashamed – *and so that it's done with*".

So is this a question of forbidding pleasure? The accident happens in the only sequence in the film that shows cheerful, happy people. They are driving at night to a summer cottage to swim and the man driving the car points out something interesting at the side of the road to the girls, who are hugging each other, just before the collision happens.

Read in this way the theme of the work would then be the right to pleasure. But whose right? Is the son weeping for his father the main character in the work, or should we take a closer look at the daughter and at Vera?

The daughter already pulls the rug from under us in the first half of the work: "Maybe it's not my dad who's crying, maybe it's someone else's dad: Sanna's dad, Mia's dad, Marko's dad, Pasi's dad or Vera's dad." This is not about any specific dad, but about a super-individual father, about the cultural idea of the father.

The main character may in the end be Vera, who is filmed in the middle of various materials of pleasure – surrounded by cigarettes, alcohol, books and souvenirs. In her apartment we also see doors deliberately left open, along with a reference to a luxury liner under construction. Even though Vera appears to have surrounded herself with pleasures, her relationship to them is evidently contradictory. +

Top left: Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *The Present*, 2001, DVD installation for 5 monitors and 5 TV spots with sound, 5 x 70-120 sec + 5 x 30 sec. © Crystal Eye Ltd, Helsinki. Courtesy of Klemens Gasser & Tanja Grunert Inc, New York.

Top right: Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *The Wind*, 2002, DVD installation for 3 projections with sound, 14`20. © Crystal Eye Ltd, Helsinki. Courtesy of Klemens Gasser & Tanja Grunert Inc, New York.

Bottom: Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *The House*, 2002, DVD installation for three projections with sound, 14`00. Photo by Marja-Leena Hukkanen. © Crystal Eye Ltd, Helsinki. Courtesy Klemens Gasser & Tanja Grunert Inc, New York.

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This page: Charles Sandison, *Word Tower*, 1999, computer, monitors, software. Photo by Antti Haapio.

Next page: Charles Sandison, *City Halls*, 2001, site-specific installation. Photo by the artist.

Pavel Büchler on Charles Sandison

Things for Words to Do

'Language is a labyrinth of paths.'
– Wittgenstein

Here's how it works. 'Staring at a blank sheet of paper is the hard part.' According to a paper manufacturer's advertisement in a recent issue of an art magazine, 'once you start, it is easy and rewarding.' My rewards, according to the terms suggested by the French publisher who originally commissioned this text,* were to amount to 75€ for every thousand characters which, at a guess, would translate into something like £500 by the time the 10,000 allotted characters have been variously grouped together to form, give or take, 1,700 words. If my quick calculation was anywhere near the mark, this looked like easy money – except that, by a contractual implication, the publisher would only honour his side of the bargain if the words thus formed could be identified, perhaps with some exceptions, as those belonging to the vocabulary of the English language and would arrive at the publisher's desk in an order which conformed to the conventions of (English) syntax and grammar, so that the semantic relationships between them could be explored by the reader to some sort of an intellectual benefit. Furthermore, the arrangement of the said characters into the said words and the sequencing of the latter into

the intelligible text should adhere to the logic of discourse and so be definitive and final. Fair enough, you might think, for, after all, this text was to be translated from one language into another – and translation, a modal shift without a loss of meaning, is really the art of understanding and maintaining the conditions of the definitive text. (Although strictly speaking, it consists of reorganising the same set of characters within a different set of rules – and voilá…)

At any rate, the quantitative basis for the proposed economic exchange – letters for euros, words for pounds, so many syllables and no more – was here to give me just enough incentive and impose a limit on what I might do. The contract was, in fact, nothing but an expiry note attached to the temporary licence to use the word processor keyboard, a reminder that I had to stop somewhere. There is a good reason for this: life is too short. In extreme, and a way beyond the human capacity to provide an experimental proof, all the possible permutations of the permitted number of characters (keystrokes), albeit finite and constrained by the rules of language, would eventually produce every word and every sentence ever written, all those yet to be written plus those that will never or can no longer be written (for there also are such)

and an unimaginable amount of random nonsense besides. Every secret ever kept would be revealed, all that is and will remain beyond discovery would be put in writing, every name of every person living, dead and unborn would be listed – and all this in every language and writing system which uses the given set of letters, the Latin alphabet for instance, including languages and systems of writing long forgotten and not yet developed.

Or in other words, the alphabet is a field of endless possibility. Disarranged on the keyboard in front of me and accompanied by the space bar, it already contains the code of the entire word-generating apparatus of language. All that needs to be done to produce a word (to bring a word which already lies dormant at my fingertips into the open) is to calculate a combination of symbols. Words themselves accumulate and fill page after page through the same process (hence word processing – the procedure for developing words much like the processing of the latent image on the photographic film). Machines can do it – and indeed frequently do – for next to no cost. It goes without saying that the publisher would not really want to purchase just any old words that I might care to process out of the characters at my disposal, but only 'good' ones (what publishers pay for

is not a word count but discrimination), those that express the best what I intend to say or what you might like to read. This is not a matter of precise typology or classification (as in what the dictionary calls 'derog.', for example). If a sentence is 'well written', if it 'reads well', it is not because the words are accurate, let alone 'correct', but because they perform well, they are good at their job. They have to be chosen for their ability to do the 'right thing' in the right place at the right time. They have to be 'good' in an almost ethical sense: they have to know what to do. How do I find them? Words have to be put to the test by writing. Writing is a way of giving words things to do.

Imagine a complete language with a ready-made vocabulary of less than ten words (mother, father, female, male, child, old, dead, food, virus) governed by a combinatory scheme of a mere seven syntactic formulae – the kind of language that a machine might use.

Here's how it works.

male + female = child; male becomes father, female becomes mother;
male + male = 50% chance of either becoming dead;
female + mother = move out of each other's path;
female + father = move out of each other's path;
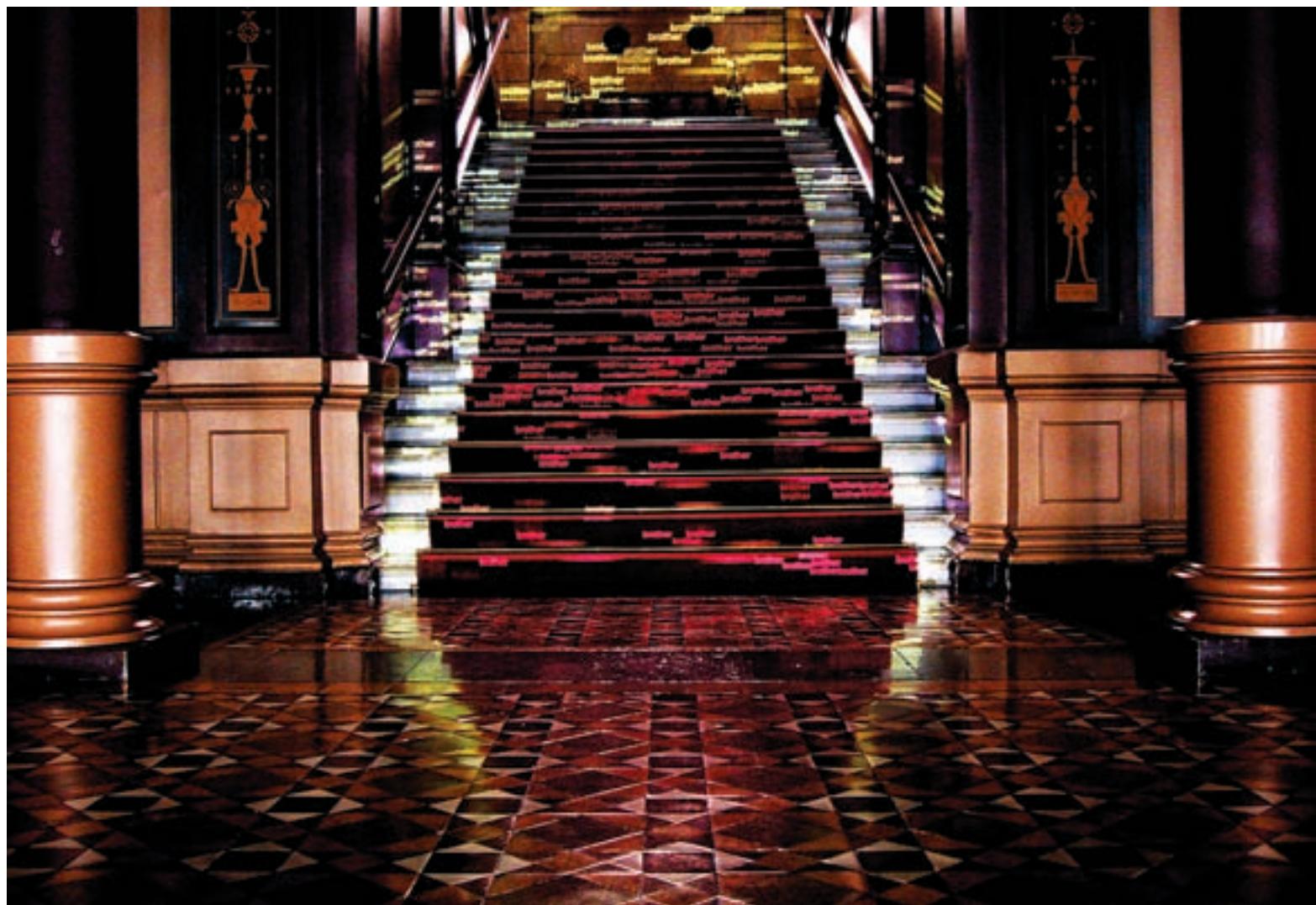
mother + child = move closer together; father + mother = move in relation to each other but not always closely; virus + male, female, father, mother, child, old = dead.

The words come from the English dictionary but, for the moment at least, they have left most of their lexical baggage behind. In this pared-down language, there are no synonyms, no nuances and no connotations or multiple meanings. It is a closed list with no further use for the alphabet. Female, male, old and dead are nouns. No adjectives, no verbs. Food and virus do their best to compensate for the absent categories but they can only do so much. Even a master of haiku would have a hard time here and all intentional thought would soon give up in frustration. Compared to this, the compressed language of teenage text messaging with its monosyllabic shorthand of abbreviations seems like a gold mine of expressive potential.

The verbal poverty and the roughness of the rudimentary rules are not the only difficulties. The very functional identity of the system is uncertain. The language has no spoken form. There is no voice, no diction, no intonation, only a silent passage from one word to another. The term 'writing' does not capture the concept very

well either. Writing forms texts; what can be 'written' in this language is not a text but texture alone. The difference is, above all, one of directionality. In a text, expression and understanding follow the semantic 'thread' in two directions: horizontally along the logical progression of the sentence and vertically across levels of meaning (we can only speak of writing when we can also speak of reading between the lines). The horizontal tendency of the text and its vertical axis are trajectories of motion: the text flows, runs, stumbles, it has a rhythm and a pace. Texture is the quality of the movement of the text. Here, patterns of movement are legislated for as predictive operations ('move out of each other's path'; 'move closer together'; 'move in relation to each other' – like commands form a linguistic exercise yard). Direction is arbitrary where disposition is the only principle. The movements here, always tangential, produce textures without the support of texts, provisional verbal constellations rather than sentences. This, then, is not writing but dispersion: display.

Words stand for things (or so it is said), but these words seem to stand (stand up) for themselves. The vocabulary is like a dramatis personae, a cast of 'characters' – the words 'act' rather than signify, destiny is their

mode. Female breeds, male competes for female, mother guides child, father defends a social unit, child eats and grows. Dead is a case in point. It does not even seem to belong to the 'vocabulary'. Rather, an odd thing for a word to do, it takes on the walk-on role of the smallest character of the writing system: the full stop, period. Children become males or females, grow old and die. Females find male partners, produce children, become mothers, grow old and die. Males fight among themselves for females, those who lose die, those who win become fathers, grow old and die. Being unto death is the single grammatical rule.

Food and virus are the nearest this language gets to verbs. Food is a passive recipient of action (it is eaten); virus is an active agent of mutation (it makes words go mad). That's about all.

And yet, there is so much more.

White luminous words progress along the four walls, floor and ceiling of a darkened room. Some are restless, moving faster than others, some proceed in a jittery kind of way or run maniacally in all directions, falling and rising, agile and tired, some converge in dynamic formations, some travel alone. A cluster of words climbs up along the edge of the doorway like a swarm of insects. Words flick-

er and vanish as other words descended upon them to feed like sparrows on crumbs of bread. Every collision between the moving words produces a response, adjustment, transformation. In every contact there is something that demands to be described as mutual awareness, even communication: rumours spread, memories of the dead remain among the living until they are whipped out by the passage of generations. This is language on the brink of coming alive; an organism, a culture, a world of words as conscious beings, trying to overcome their condition.

How can words of a language which barely deserves to be recognised as such, aided by nothing but the on/off, yes/no of binary calculation, do something that, until now, only the languages of poetry or metaphysics could hope to do? It may seem simple: everything in the world is a manifestation of infinite possibility (some call it 'chaos', others speak of 'chance events'). The world itself is open to calculation but not to discourse. This is why the binary code rather than dialectics can create worlds out of symbols ('words') which parallel the order of things in the living world of our perceptions. But this explanation is inadequate. And it is inadequate precisely because it is an explanation. It is just something for words to do. +

The Operations Necessary to Solve a Problem

Charles Sandison in an Email Conversation with Pavel Büchler

Dear Charles, What is your medium?

Dear Pavel, At the same time as writing this reply I am also 'coding' for a show in Helsinki, so please excuse my lack of focus. This is email, after all, so it won't be great literature. (A definition: 'coding – the arrangement in a coded form, usually acceptable to a specific computer, of the instructions for the operations necessary to solve a problem.' Dictionary of Technical Terms for Aerospace Use, NASA 2001.)

At the moment, I'm more interested in the description of your recent work in London. Kafka. Text to speech. What model were the old loudspeakers? I think you should do this again cross-channel or something, using those old lighthouse horns. Would it be heard? Other people's work is infinitely more interesting.

Anyway, in response to your interesting and relevant question, I attach two jpegs of my studio as of the 27th September, 1pm, and then later, when the sun has set (which conveniently happens fast in Finland at this time of year). As you can see from the images, I'm really a product of systematised Scottish art education. You will notice the use of 'objects of just the right size and shape', masking tape,

wire, wood salvaged from the neighbour's skip. (I think there is a glue-gun someplace out of view.) I don't know how you describe these tools correctly but I guess you could call them exactly what they are; the things you need to get the job done.

I suppose my first and most obvious medium is 'darkness' or the lack of light. I've made pieces for light spaces but I really feel most comfortable in the dark. For film makers and artists alike, darkness is a wonderfully forgiving medium. For a start, you only

have to add stuff rather than removing or displacing it. I probably discovered this affinity through an education as a photographer.

To be honest, I have no idea what my medium is, so I'm going to write a little about how I arrived at having 28 computers in my basement (12 of which actually sometimes work). Maybe the question regarding the definition of medium (potentially for all artists) is quite often better described by what it is not. The best thing about art school is that it absolutely excellent at making you decide what you are not good at. It really goes out of its way to do this. I mean, for example, ever since I was old enough to clutch a grubby wax crayon until arriving at art school in Glasgow, I had a 200% commitment to becoming a painter. I realised within the first 72 hours that I was definitely not going to be that. I was also not going to spend too much time drawing naked people either, at least not for fun.

As a second best option and for no other clear reason I spent three years as a student of photography stumbling out of the darkroom after several hours, freshly fixed print in a holding tray, experiencing the rushing sensation of utter disappointment, being sucked out by a vacuum of boredom and disinterest. After a while, I realised that the essential part of the work was the 'going in and out' of the darkroom. (I tried this alone for a while and found it entertaining and it also saved me a lot in materials). What I also found fascinating in photography was the chemical process of transformation that occurs within the silver halide crystal matrix of the print. This is a kind of a 'private cinema' that the photographic printer witnesses while working, a gradual cross-fade between the photographer's imagination and the reality of the emerging print. Powerful stuff. It had to be – photography as a craft was pretty dull otherwise.

If I describe the essence of my medium it would probably be best seen as the transformative in art: how you can get from nothing to something. I finally arrived at using the computer code as it allowed me to reproduce this metamorphosis, and, unlike photography, the process of transformation occurs visually and can involve the spectator as a 'witness'. So more like theatre than painting.

I think that, ultimately, your medium forces itself upon you! Maybe when you reach a finite amount of dead ends it becomes a career? Or perhaps there is a kind of lazy predetermination at work here: at a certain unspecified moment a vague interest in a medium explodes into a zealous bustling Lutheran work ethic. I still have to do a lot of explaining to myself what I mean by that. I often catch myself telling people how busy I am, until I realise I have not physically moved for over four hours and then only to measure my work table because it was approximately the same height as the new stand for my projector should be. To be honest, my medium is anything I can make myself/us believe it is. This is my version of Alan Turing's test for artificial intelligence. A theoretical test that supposes that if you believe that the person you are communicating with on the other end of the telephone is human (and not a machine/computer) then you are dealing with true machine intelligence. I sometimes wonder if I'm basically doing the same thing. I use words, computer code, space, objects, architecture, history, light, science, nature. I transcribe them as computer code and manifest their 'overlap' in the real world as projections in space. Ultimately, I use the audience as part of the processing algorithm, their presence is required and calculated. They become part of the system and its evolution. (This is exactly how I think a painting 'works' by the way, or maybe I just watched too much Star Trek?)
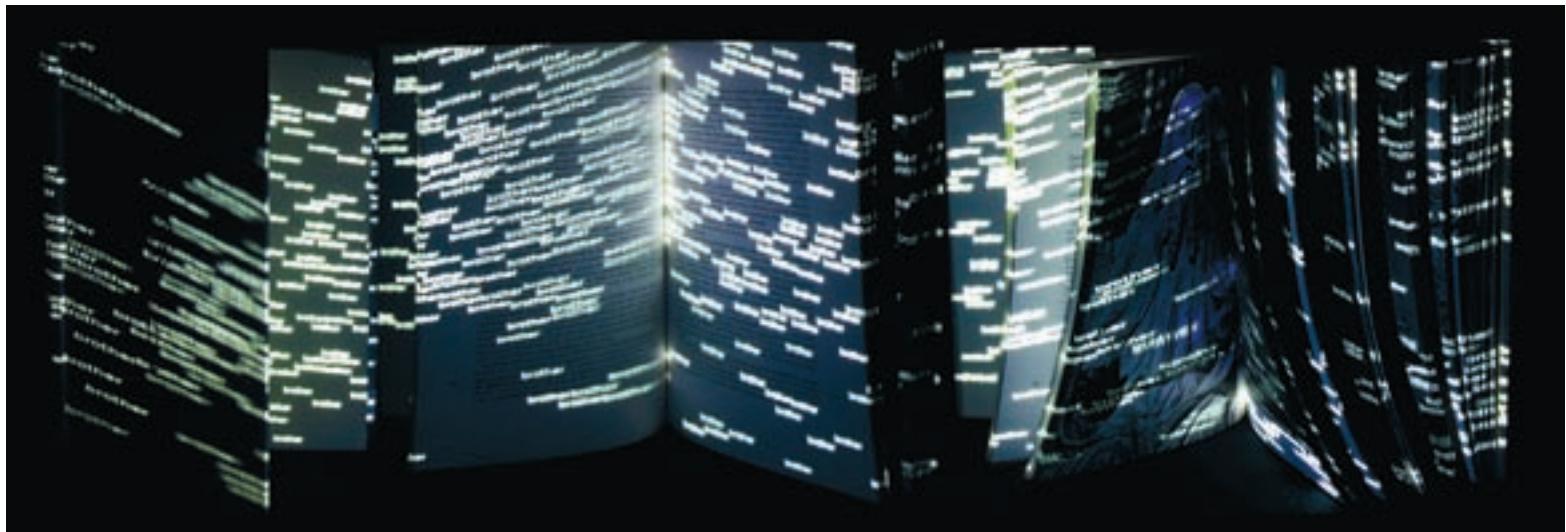
The strange thing is that I taught myself to program when I was 12 years old. I bought a second-hand computer from my friend for £30 in 1983 (I still use it), a Sinclair ZX81. I'm doing exactly the same as I did 23 years ago. I'm honestly very connected to my medium (in an almost umbilical way), but the medium is not 'the media'. In the end I don't have a lot to say about computers in art. I would generally discourage their use 'as computers', and especially as 'just a tool for making art'. In my installations, I do everything possible to guide people away from the fact there are any computers in the room what-so-ever. I have no great affinity with the term 'media art', I don't really want to engage with it as a topic because I quite like not being able to explain myself to myself, and if I did 'media art', it would be like visiting a psychiatrist. I would suddenly be aware of how I am a product of a digital paradigm shift etc. etc. You see, I'm not, I'm just your ordinary painter, except that there was a terrible mix up somewhere along the line with computer code, genes, turpentine, Glasgow and Ilford Microphen. I didn't plan to be a 'computer artist', I don't see it as a distinction.

Dear Charles, The question of your medium is always the second one in a conversation with a stranger. It always comes on the heels of an initial enquiry into your professional identity, the moment you reply 'I am an artist.' Of course, on my part, it was a trick question, but you spotted the provocation and turned it back on itself.

The pictures from your studio really give the perfect answer. Or maybe a perfect metaphor for a fundamental challenge facing any artist working with words: the immateriality of language. It seems to me that for you the question is not so much 'what?' as 'where?' – the location, the place...

In some ways, metaphorically again, your work also uses a form of 'text-to-speech' conversion – where 'text' is something abstract whereas 'speech' is something concrete – like the computer facility that I have used in the piece that we talked about last night and in which Kafka's words are made into physical sounds, 'things', as they are read out by the synthetic voices of 'Kathy' and 'Fred'. Since you are interested, here is a picture in return. The speakers are something (beautifully) called the 'Marconi Sound Projector', a mid-1920s design from roughly the time when Kafka's The Castle was first published. The text that the voices articulate is an abridged passage from the novel in which the landlady in the village inn explains a similar condition (of 'nothing-to-something') in different terms:

'Herr Klamm is a gentleman from the Castle. But what are you? You are not from the Castle, you are not from the village, you are not anything. Or rather, unfortunately, you are something, a stranger, a man who is always causing trouble, a man who isn't wanted and who is in everybody's way.'

You are right, the artist's medium is always the 'code', in the sense that it conveys what 'you need to get a job done'. You are also right that the artist's medium is best described by what it is not – not what is just unnecessary or superfluous, but what has to be left out (daylight, in your case, for instance). And finally, you are right, that, as Jochen Gertz once wrote, 'the most important ingredient are people'. The audience is the one factor in the 'processing algorithm' that ultimately makes the work work. (Indeed, that is what painters intuitively know and what they try to test, or 'calculate', when they step away from the canvas to see it from the vantage point of the viewer.)

'Coding' is a way of thinking about the stranger. It is also a way of pointing out something that is already latently 'there' but not yet in the 'right place', it doesn't say anything yet.

So the next question is 'what is your message?' (Watch out! This too is a trick question.)

Dear Pavel, Sorry this reply comes late in the day. I would be surprised if you are near a computer at this time in the evening. I had to put thinking about your question on hold this afternoon because I was lost in the code, something was not quite working and it took a while to find the bug. I had to 'reverse think' for three hours.

The 'message' is probably going to be late this week...

The show in Helsinki opens the day after tomorrow, and although the work is not a large piece, it is something new and can only ever be shown in this space at this exact moment. There is nothing special about the gallery in relation to the work. (In fact, the space is a little on the small side, yet another 'project space'. I think they should call them 'liability spaces'.)

Why is this space ideal? I know that I will never show this work again if I don't show it this week. I don't know if that sounds like a sensible response or a mature approach. I know that if I don't make the work soon, I will end up hating it. The thing about the 'message' (whatever it is) is that it should be dispatched with as little fuss and as promptly as possible.

A work of art is much like a vector. It follows a trajectory like a cork fired from a child's pop gun. Ultimately, the message part of art occurs when the cork catches some innocent bystander on the forehead.

I still can't help but agree with Marshall McLuhan: with telephone and TV it is not so much the message as the sender that is "sent."

With this in mind I'm curious as to what bits of myself I've just emailed to you this evening? My wife told me today about these two Finnish brothers who owned a restaurant in the countryside. Although they lived next door to each other, they left at the same time for work every day in separate cars. And since they each owned one of the first Nokia mobile phones when no one else did, they called to each other on their commute and told each other where they were at any given moment. This is not an original story but it reminds me that 'email' is exactly the same thing. The thing that separates us also connects us. 'Nokia – connecting people' (promotional slogan).

I suppose my message is about living with this separation. Mind and body, rationalism and phantasm, code and execution.

Goodnight

Good morning, Charles, Hitting an innocent bystander on the forehead with a cork promptly dispatched from a toy pistol seems a nicer thing to do than hitting the backs of people's heads with a baseball bat as Bruce Nauman demanded. Apart from the obvious differences, the former happens by accident as the cork misses its intended target (it's a 'chance event'), whereas the latter is perpetrated with a calculated purpose. Both instances produce 'shock', but the former scenario leaves open the possibility for the bystander to duck as the projectile flies through the air, while Nauman's 'victim' is approached by stealth, no chances taken or given.

I suppose, I should now ask you about your intentions. I won't. My final question will be instead: 'how do you allow for accidents to happen in your calculations?'

Charles Sandison, *City Halls*, 2001, site-specific installation. Photo by the artist.

PS: A propos your Nokia story. Before I had my computer connected to the internet, my emails were received and printed out for me by a secretary in an office. Every morning she would bring me a small pile of messages to read and reply to. A half of them were from her.

Dear Pavel, I'm done with the show in Helsinki and I'm back in my studio in Tampere so I can now finally answer your last question. Sorry about the delay...

Thanks for this last question. I feel I'm on safe ground talking about 'accidents' as they crop up a lot in much of what I produce. In a medium that proposes exactness, it would seem strange that you would have space for accident and even coincidence. In reality the computer programs that I write are represented as lines of text, not unlike sentences in a textual narrative or theatrical script. As the program develops you have to keep track of the properties of each actor, timing, make sure everything remembers its place, and above

all, that the thing does not crash.

So, in the same way, that for example in a theatrical script, if two characters suddenly swapped roles the whole narrative would be affected. This event happens more often than I care to admit. The more projects I do, the faster I have to write, and naturally mistakes occur. A great deal of time is spent reading and re-reading a body of code to identify the culprits. The difference between two numbers would be enough to allow the system to provoke the actors to potentially eat each other alive. Also, because these works (much like a piece of theatre) develop in real-time and are not based on a 'video loop', as the system grows and multiplies then the number of re-combinations and interactions between the actors grows and shrinks over time. So a small deviation in the code might not manifest itself until much later, when the show has been running for a month. The work suddenly has a nervous breakdown and vanishes over the course of a day. I don't know how I would characterise these

'mistakes' but they seem to be more complex than just simple 'errors'. My work has grown up around them, they are like genetic mutations, they allow for the work to develop in ways that I can't necessarily predict but I can later comprehend. That is to say that I take responsibility for the work as an author and I don't for a moment suggest that the art work creates itself. I am absolutely not interested in artificial anything (sugar included), I am not out to prove that the computer has a mind of its own. However, I'm interested in the interplay between who I am, what I can do, how does what I do influence a perceived audience greater than myself, how does the audience change the work, and 'ultimately' how do I change. Without sounding too 'cyber', I guess that I'm a part of the digital system, my clumsy ability as a computer programmer is a necessary part in the evolution of this 'theatre of words'. In conclusion I am happy to recognise that despite using complex digital technology, what I do is no different than any other medium

one would care to think of. I hope the difference in my use of the computer is that I do not present it as a critique of itself (at least not exclusively), but rather as 'one choice among many' and as a choice relevant to me (at least for now). I have always wanted to present just my code as the 'work of art' on a gallery wall, but I thus far have not done so as that would be too prosaic. However, in the context of this interview I will finish this conversation in computer code.

```
char *you
do {
    you = get_name();
    text_out("you are not Pavel");
    if (rand() % 10 == 1) {
        text_out("but I will think
        of you as Pavel");
        You = "Pavel";
    }
while (you != "Pavel")
text_out("goodbye Pavel");
text_out("best regards, Charles's
program");
exit(0) +
```
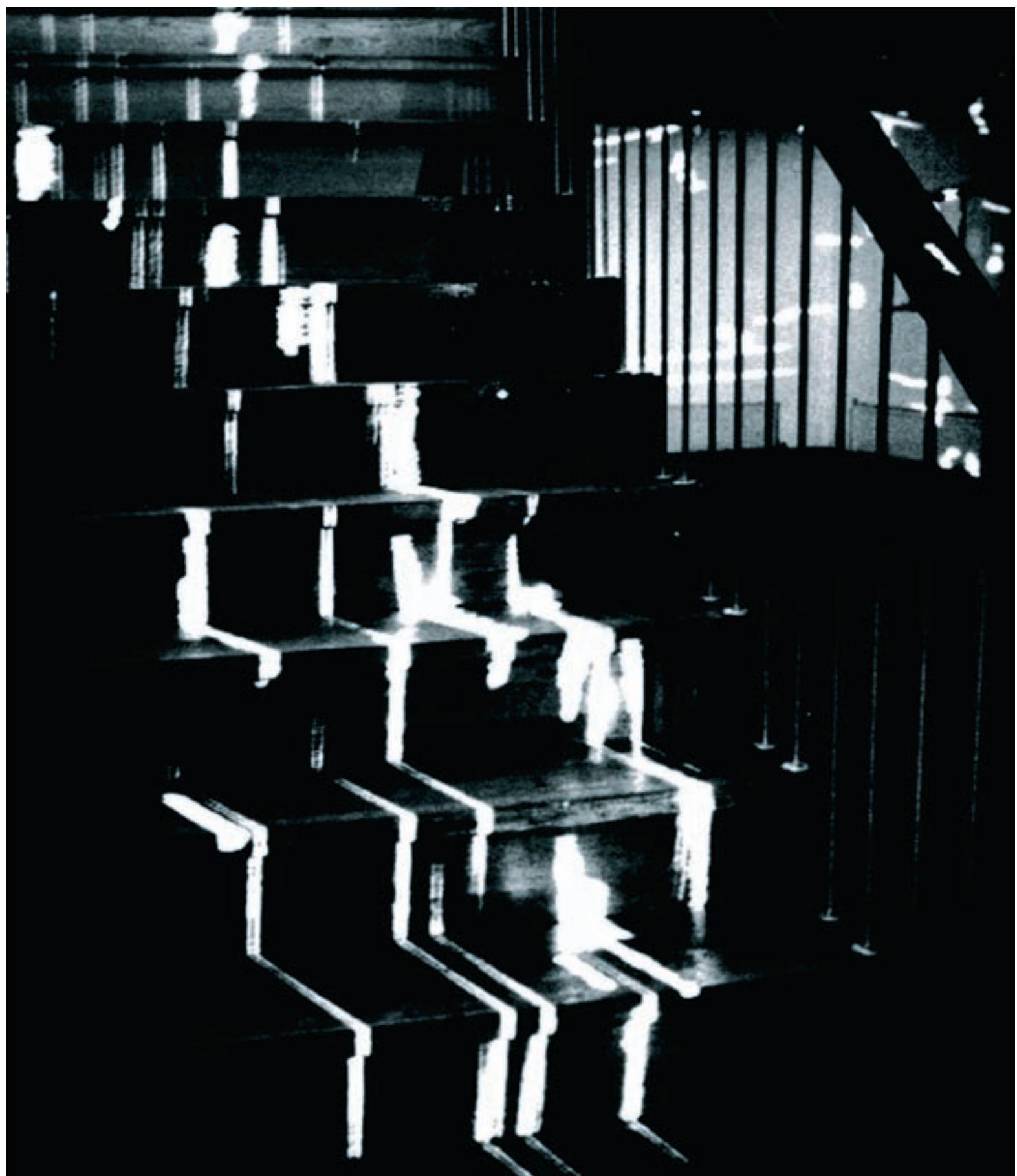
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Francis McKee On Salla Tykkä

If You Close Your Eyes

Salla Tykkä's *Cave* trilogy is a series of short films that manage to shock the viewer with their beauty while confounding any easy attempt to pin down their meaning. Filmed over four years, the work seems to move backwards and forwards in time, tracing moments in a girl's early life. Although Tykkä uses a different actress in each of the three films, the complete work suggests that the stories follow the development of one person.

In the first film – *Lasso* (2000) – a girl returns from jogging to find the front door of her house locked. Approaching a window at the side of the house, she sees a young man in the living room, stripped to the waist and practising with a spinning lasso. He twirls the rope in a large vertical O, leaping in and out of its circle before striking it on the floor with a loud whipcrack. Outside, the girl can at first see only herself in the window and then the image of the young man. Watching him, tears seem to well up in her eyes and she slowly backs away from the house. In the film's last shots, the camera retreats from the scene, focusing finally on the frozen ground.

Lasso was originally a scene in a larger script containing four separate stories. Tykkä realised it would be financially impossible to shoot the whole script and focused instead on the last scene of the last story. While editing the sequence she chose the

soundtrack – music instantly familiar from the Sergio Leone movie, *Once Upon a Time in the West*.

In the second film in the trilogy – *Thriller* (2001) – the music is again recognisable and has its roots in cinema. In a more developed scenario, the theme from John Carpenter's *Halloween* plays as the camera closes in on a modern house in a gloomy, autumnal forest. Upstairs a young girl lies on a bed while in the forest below her mother builds a bonfire and her father tends to the sheep. At one point the father enters the house and approaches his daughter's room, testing the locked handle before returning to his chores. He leads one white sheep down to a pathway, tethering it up before taking a rowboat out onto a dark lake. The young girl rouses herself, runs unseen by her mother down the pathway and enters a cottage. There she stares at her reflection in a mirror before noticing a hunting rifle by the fireplace. Picking it up she takes aim at the sheep beyond the window and pulls the trigger. We see the bullet hole that has cleanly penetrated the window, and we see the dead, blood-stained sheep. The film closes with an image of the flames of the bonfire rising in front of the main house.

It is clear from the girl's age that this story takes place before the scene from *Lasso* and the time shifts continue in the final film of the trilogy, *Cave* (2003). Here, a simple story subtly references sci-fi movies and focuses on a

girl who is clearly older than the protagonists of the first two films. The story begins as she approaches a house, dressed in slightly futuristic white clothes and begins to dig in the borders of the garden. Suddenly she stops as if being called to follow the sounds of the sea which we can hear on the soundtrack. Running through a snowy forest, she is forced to dive for cover at the sound of a large explosion. Eventually reaching the mouth of a cave, she enters and follows a man-made tunnel within until she reaches a shallow pool where she begins to search in the water with her fingers. Looking up she notices three miners working in the distance, drilling in the walls of the cave. In the close-ups of the work there is no sound of the machinery and the men seem almost spectral, appearing in another dimension. This effect is reinforced when they finish drilling and walk down the cave past the girl as if unconscious of her presence. As they pass, one miner finally turns and shines his torch on the girl showing no emotion or reaction as he does so. The scene carries an element of sexual danger which is diffused when the men move off silently. The girl continues her journey through the cave and eventually emerges onto a rocky, primitive beach where the sea pounds thunderously. In the final scene we see her as a tiny figure against the immensity of the cliff and the cavemouth before the screen fades to white.

Each of the three films documents

no more than a moment in a life yet they are so highly charged that they immediately generate multiple interpretations. This effect is amplified by a level of detail in each of the films that rivals any Elizabethan miniature. Critics have noted, for example, Tykkä's extensive use of mirror imagery throughout the works and her use of windows as a membrane between the inner and outer worlds of the girls. The choice of architectural locations and the role of the buildings in each story also introduces other layers of significance.

Most importantly, there is a sense of fragmentation inherent in the three films. Viewers lack any context for the stories and there is none of the narrative exposition we have come to expect in mainstream cinema. The absence of dialogue removes another of the orthodox supports for narrative coherence and the endings of the films offer little resolution to the events that have unfolded on the screen. Despite all of these shocks to our cinematic expectations, however, Salla Tykkä manages to hold our attention. The seductive beauty of the cinematography certainly plays a strong role in this – her sense of composition, colour and the choreography of physical gesture all draw on the most elemental powers of cinema and the moving image.

Within the overall narrative ambiguity of Salla Tykkä's films there is one more vital element that guides the audience, and that is the music which soundtracks each work. Given the relative silence of the films the music she has chosen is bound to have a significant role to play. The choice of strong, dramatic themes from familiar mainstream movies, however, works on several levels. In *Lasso*, for instance, the lyrical and powerful orchestral theme from Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in the West* has an immediate emotional impact. The operatic swoon of the music transforms a domestic scene into an epiphany and heightens our response to the images presented on the screen. The melancholy at the heart of the music suggests the longing and sadness of the girl watching the boy absorbed in his lasso practice

and it amplifies the implications of the scene beyond what is literally happening on screen. The suggestion of loss it generates helps us to conclude that the image may even imply the sense of otherness we perceive in others and the knowledge that they are ultimately unknowable. At the same time, the slightly sentimental edge to the music also keeps us grounded and allows us some distance from the emotional surge of the work.

Inevitably too, the soundtrack to *Lasso* reminds us of its original source in Leone's movie. Coming at the end of the Western in movie history, *Once Upon a Time in the West* is one of the genre's best examples, offering an elegiac panorama of pioneering America. Within this epic landscape, the director casts Henry Fonda against type as a sadistic gunman and the movie plays out Leone's characteristic battle of good versus evil in one of the darkest westerns ever made. Tykkä's boy with a lasso connects us back to the West and scenes from the movie play again in our minds while we watch him leap through the spinning rope.

In the second film in the trilogy, music plays a similar role with the choice of themes from the horror classic *Halloween*. From its opening notes, which themselves owe something to the theme for *The Exorcist*, we are prepared for the eruption of the supernatural and, when the young girl appears soon after, we automatically perceive her in a horror tradition that equates teenage female sexuality with uncontrollable forces of darkness. Tykkä enjoys the possibilities this allows her – the girl in the film has only to turn her head and glare at her bedroom door for a moment of teenage moodiness to be transformed into a potentially satanic outburst. Likewise, the suggestiveness of the music colours our perceptions of the forest, the girl's gothic mother, the dark lake, and the flames of the bonfire. The film's title, *Thriller*, of course also alludes to Michael Jackson's album of the same name, reminding us of both the tongue-in-cheek horror video he made to accompany the song and of the more recent, edgier public persona of the performer.

As with *Lasso*, the reference to genre cinema and video summon up the commonplaces of those traditions and recall powerful moments in the best of those films. Most genres, though, have a sense of their own boundaries and often wryly expose them. Horror films perhaps point to this theatricality more than most and Salla Tykkä uses this to her advantage in *Thriller* where she can suggest a situation laden with confused and violent sexual emotions but give us some objective distance on the scene through these cinematic gestures.

It is interesting, then, that in the final movement of the trilogy – *Cave* – the music is less specific while still operating as a key interpretative element of the work. If there are specific cinematic allusions in this film they are in the landscape and the overall mood of 'sci-fi', particularly in the closing images of the beach which recalls movies such as *2001 Space Odyssey*, *Solaris* and *Planet of the Apes*. At various moments the music does perform a classic cinematic function – the suspense heightened, for instance, when one of the workmen turns and shines a torch on the hiding girl. In general, however, the music is practical and, in the last scenes, serene. The intense passions and internal struggles of the first two sections of the trilogy have been left behind and even the dangers of this final episode are more distant and controlled.

Given the title of this film and the trilogy as a whole it is tempting to interpret it in the light of the story of Plato's cave. Plato describes an image of prisoners locked in darkness, mistaking shadows on the wall of a cave for reality until they are released and, in the light outside, finally understand that everything they knew before was just a mere representation of the real thing itself. The trilogy also certainly has a narrative arc that traces the transition and transformation of a girl in puberty, coming to terms with sexuality, emotions and her surroundings. One critic has already pointed out the potential relationship of the girls and their reflections to the psychoanalytic theory of

Jacques Lacan and the 'mirror stage' of child development, recognising the self as an objective image. Within each of the films in the trilogy, it is possible to construct multiple potential narratives and readings – asking what is the relationship between the boy and girl in *Lasso*, what is the motivation for the girl's violent action in *Thriller* or what is the girl searching for in *Cave*?

There are an infinity of answers but each resides with the viewer that constructs them. Tykkä has created deliberately fragmented works that leave gaps where more conventional cinema narratives would provide bridges. The layer of cinematic allusions and the memories of other films this conjures up also interacts with the images before us. We know how the stories could go, and how they have worked themselves out before. We also know that Tykkä is presenting us with scenes that are more domestic, mundane and closer to real life than the depictions of reality in genre movies such as westerns, horror or sci-fi. Each of us constructs narratives from these elements and in the trilogy Tykkä makes us aware of how we also construct narratives of our own lives and history. The memory that retrieves movie scenes, prompted by the familiarity of the soundtrack, is the same function that constructs and reconstructs our selves on a daily basis.

Asked what was the attraction of the moving image for her as an artist, Salla Tykkä identified this process as a vital element of her work:

I think film comes even closer to realism, almost naturalism. That's possible with film. For me the attraction is that I think this could be real life. I have wondered about the way people see their lives. If you close your eyes and then use your memory it's like a film – the image enters and is projected in the back of your brain. I think there's something that is inside you, built in already, innate – it's connected to memory – so that's why I use film. +

Salla Tykkä, *Thriller*, 2001, 35mm film with
sound transferred to video, 6`50.
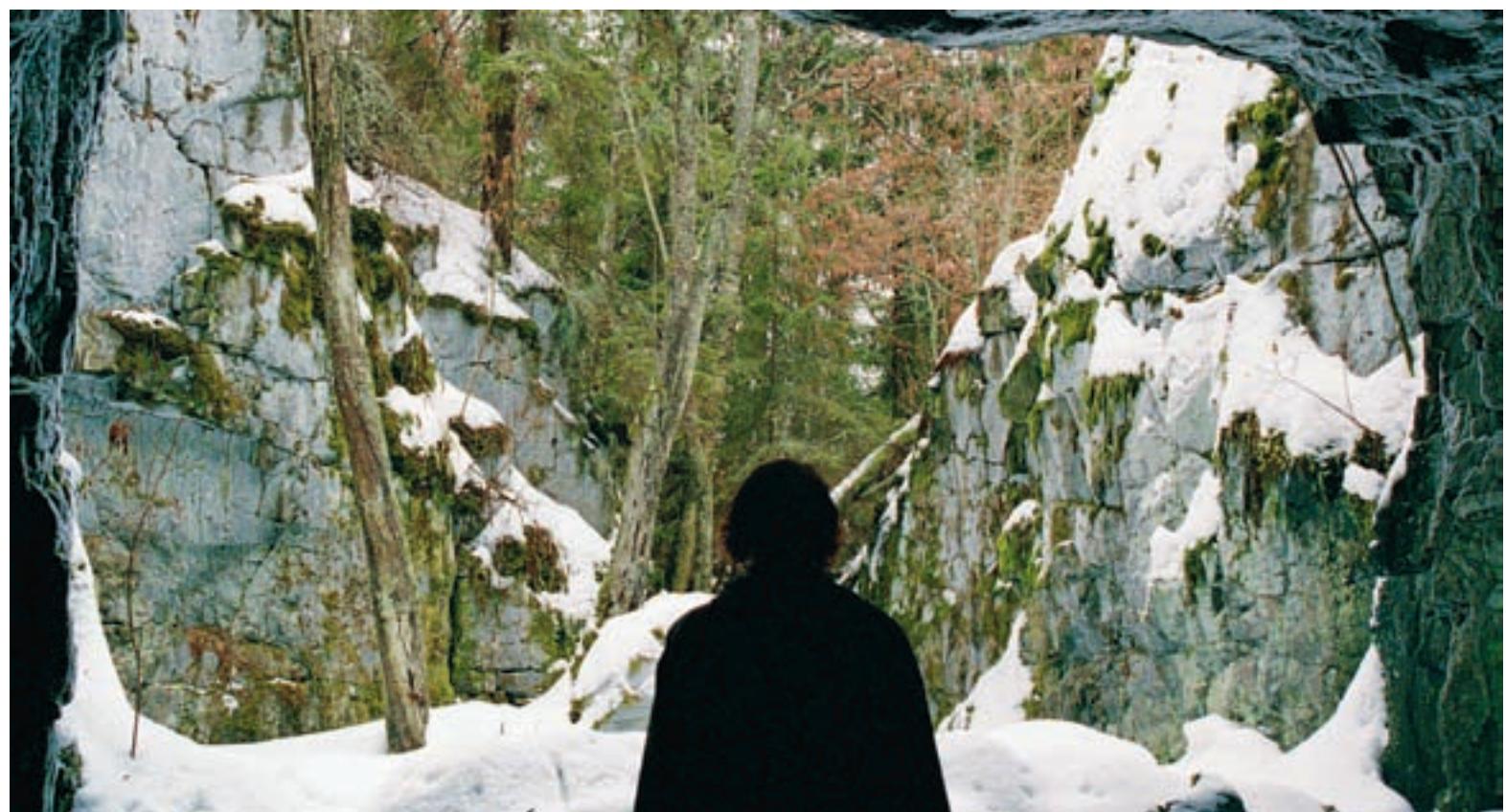
Tapio Mäkelä on Minna Långström

Technology, Artist and Experiencer

Minna Långström´s *The Chinese Room* and *Drawn To You*

In her works Minna Långström addresses conceptual concerns about technology by incorporating self-reflexive properties into them. The *Drawn To You* video installation accentuates certain features that are powerfully present in both works, i.e. the self-reflexiveness of the way it has been made and of the production technology. The viewer's weight on a sensor starts a video in which a charcoal drawing of a male peacock is constructed, in a process-like way, the bird's visual details attracting or 'drawing in' the viewer at the same time as they are 'drawn for' him or her.

The main theme is attraction on the level of both the depicted object and of the mode of presentation. The work, as I see it, is also humorous, in the sense that the picture gives us a glimpse of the 'drawer who draws for you', i.e. the artist, who at the same time signs the work and indicates that

its maker also has a mastery of traditional drawing techniques. If the drawer, who is not necessarily the artist of the work or even the drawer of the original, does not appear in the pictures, then nor does the work, as it were, 'underline' the fabrication process or the construction of the picture (the self-reflexive level). In a way, *Drawn to You* is also Långström contemplating her own relationship with traditions in visual art and with the theory of ways of looking, while *The Chinese Room* is more clearly linked to the media-art and philosophy-of-technology contexts.

The Chinese Room is a thesis in artificial intelligence research, which has John Searle proposed to show that, even if computers were able to imitate human-like thinking and behaviour, they cannot be shown to apply actual intelligence. In this philosophical test, person X, who does not speak Chinese, is placed in a room, while Chinese speakers observing the situation from outside it try to guess whether there is a computer or a human being inside it. Thus, Långström asks in her own installation, on the one hand, how do animated characters in story spaces communicate together or in relation to avatar figures inside their fictive world and, on the other hand, how should the experiencer of the work relate to the different levels of the installation's representation and narrative?

Of these questions, the first, the internal reflection of the work's nar-

rative, brings out the question implicit in Chinese Room theorem, since the narrative's subjects, at least on the everyday level, find it easier to discuss with an artificial intelligence figure than with each other. Even though this avatar is not perhaps intuitively intelligent, on an everyday level, it serves as a partner in conversation. Hence Långström's question, "Do we really understand each other, or do we only project various things onto each other's words and actions?" also seems to confirm that, even though an artificial-intelligence entity does not have its own subjectivity, anyone can project this onto it as one of its properties. That being the case, rather than corroborating Lacan's mirror theory, the artificial-intelligence entity becomes a projected other voice/image of the self, allowing conversations with yourself and self-reflection, as in Vygotsky's interior dialogue.

What kind of question does the installation's presentation ask the user of the work, who cannot personally change the narrative of an animation already created in advance, but can swap his or her point of view on the various parts of the Chinese Room in which the figures spend their imprisoned role time? What kind of comment is produced by the fact that the role figures are seen viewing a video image into which the user himself has been transposed as a picture surface on the 'screen' in the Chinese Room?

The levels of interaction in the

work focus attention more on control and supervision than on the narrative enjoyment generated by the choice. Thus, in an interesting way, for the experiencer the work in itself is not so much an experience of a narrative as of his or her own subject position in relation to the narrative's spatial presentation, and to the conceptual questions that it raises. Nor does the user's own picture in the work's 'interior world' in any way advance the narrative, but rather accentuates the way that the user is a voyeur who lacks the option of communicating with the figures in the work. The experiencer can only project his or her self, or rather an imaginary partner in his or her own interior dialogue, onto the figures in the installation, and everyone can, if they like, 'animate' (in the sense of awakening to life) figures that are already animated in their imagination.

Referring to the background information from the beginning, *The Chinese Room* does not foreground the 3D-animation technology, but has created narrative sequences, that are still contextualised via their different levels of representation. Hence, the work succeeds from the experiencer's viewpoint in raising and addressing conceptual questions. A more wide-ranging presentation of the Chinese Room theorem in a supplementary text in the presentation context and a deeper reworking of the question in the work itself remain tasks for the further development of the work. +
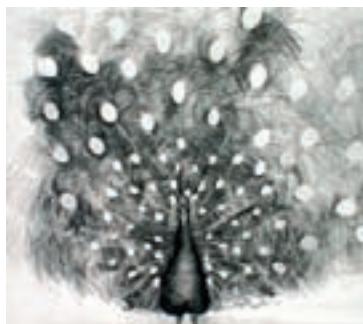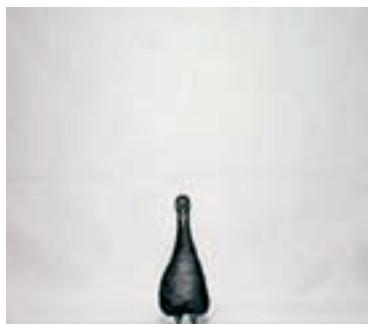
Left: Minna Långström, *Drawn to You*, 2002, stop-frame animation with modified sounds of drawing, plexiglas, steel frame.

Below: Minna Långström, *The Chinese Room*, 2003, 3D animation.
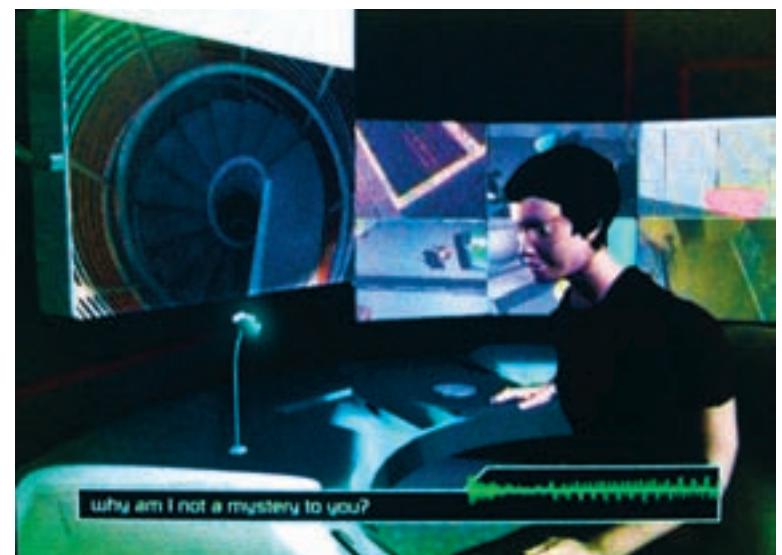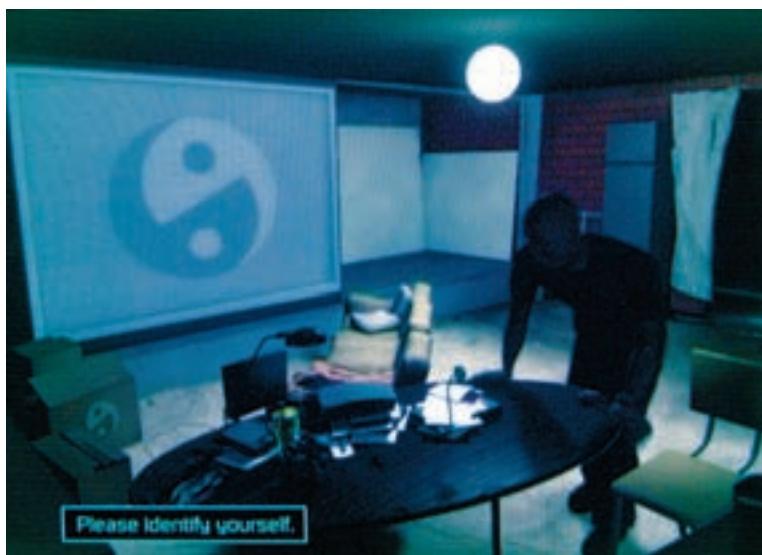
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Susanna Paasonen

Soft Bubbles of War and Mayhem

A Discussion with Minna Långström

Electronic media are essentially about communication at a distance. Telephone, radio, television and the Internet, all allow us to explore and "browse" other places and other times, while remaining in the safety of our own home: images of famine, war and natural catastrophes appear on the TV or computer screen, momentarily penetrating the everyday environment before disappearing again. Dubbed "mobile privatization" by Raymond Williams, this development enables simultaneous mobility (to see and hear things from afar) and domesticity (being at home, feeling at home) via the products of consumer electronics and media industry.

The sense of connectedness created by the media is paradoxical, because it involves distance as much as proximity: images of war may appear in the living room, but in a sanitized form lacking the materiality and corporeality of the actual events. These electronic images disappear soon enough, to be replaced by weather broadcasts, advertisements and game shows. Images, even ones of extreme violence, become commodities, some of which are repeated and remembered (like the collapse of the WTC towers), while recollection of others fades away. Living in a media culture, we may know about war and violence that occur somewhere, but this is a very limited, and detached form of knowledge.

Minna Långström's installation *Bubble* addresses several aspects of mobile privatization and war. Created as a fantastic nursery space

with oversized furniture that makes you feel you were shrinking, and using soap bubbles as the interface, the installation recycles uncensored video footage of war downloaded from the Internet. By blowing soap bubbles, the user can also make animated soap bubbles appear on the screen, filled with images of war. In the protected space of the nursery, the user interacts with raw war footage, plays with it, but the interaction and experience of it is limited. War videos, like soap bubbles, fade away, while there is an element of play in the interaction: blowing soap bubbles is, after all, a children's leisure activity undertaken for the purpose of aesthetic entertainment and distraction (seeing the everyday material of washing-up liquid turn into glittering, almost immaterial forms).

SP: The effect of the installation space is at once infantilizing and distancing – it is like stepping into a fairytale space. What part does the idea of childhood play in the project?

ML: The nursery in the installation stands for a protected environment. People usually (and quite naturally) want their children to spend their first years in a relatively safe, peaceful and trouble-free environment, even if they know that a nursery does not by far reflect the reality of the world, in many cases not even the home in which the nursery is imbedded.

I see the installation both as a question and a comment... It is a reflection on how images of violence,

which we want to protect ourselves and our children from, nevertheless manage to make their way back into the playroom in one form or another. But it also explores the fact that we seem to enjoy them as long as they are brought to us in the form of entertainment. The question is how real the wars we see depicted and documented on TV appear to us? Furthermore, how important is the reality-factor if we can't relate to something that doesn't have immediate, personal consequences to ourselves?

SP: The installation space also seems to me decidedly "girly" in its use of pastel colors and soap bubbles.

ML: The main color is light blue, which is a common color for little boy's and girl's rooms in the West. I expressly did not want to make the piece gender specific. However, your question is interesting, because it makes me think about how the toys and games of boys are typically more violent than girls'. I recently talked to a mother of two young boys. She firmly believed that playing violent games lies in the nature of boys, judging from her own experiences.

But to what extent do we tolerate and/or encourage violent games as a part of boys' upbringing because of social circumstances (i.e. social pressure to buy the right toys etc)? Why are young boys excused for their interest in violence, while girls are not? If we agree that mastering physical violence is not the best tool for reaching personal or professional goals in Finnish

society, then why should it still today be a masculine norm? Could it be rather that all of us have at least a latent interest in violence, as long as it isn't being carried out against us? And that humanity in this sense can't be seen as divided into a violent (masculine) and a peaceful (feminine) part? If so, could it be that interest in the production and consumption of news about wars and other conflicts on TV and the Internet can partially have its origin in human sensational interest in violence, rather than fully in our concern for its victims?

SP: These videos do seem to have a fair element of "snuff" in them, the attraction being in the reality of the depicted events and acts. I fully agree that this links them to the logic of spectacle and the attraction of violence rather than, say, empathy towards its victims… and seeing this attraction as something gender-specific would not indeed be very useful. The nursery also suggests that there is no space "outside" the mediation of violence and the possible enjoyment it brings. Blowing soap bubbles triggers a download of a video file from the Internet. In this sense, the user is necessarily implicated in the consumption and circulation of war images, literally asking for them. There is no possibility of innocence for the user, in spite of the nursery setting.

ML: To me the shocking thing about the violent videos circulating on the P2P networks and on the Internet in general, are the nature and quan-

Right: Minna Långström, *The Bubble*, 2004, participatory video installation (detail).

Below: Minna Långström, sketch for *The Bubble*, 2004, participatory video installation (detail).

tity of it. Before the Internet it required an extra effort to acquire videos of extreme violence, real or staged, sexual and non-sexual. I guess a customer would have had to visit a place where these videos were sold or rented illegally.

Now, by contrast, anyone can easily find such content on the Internet. Such material is likely to appear sooner or later in an Internet search, especially in file sharing systems, the P2P networks. So, information of this nature can come to get us, instead of the other way round! That makes the very possibility of complete innocence difficult to maintain.

SP: The images appearing in the bubbles are extremely violent: explosions, shooting and dying. Yet the bubbles also distort and hide the images, preventing the user from "seeing it all". But does this not contain the danger of aestheticizing war – of turning disturbing images into abstract shapes and forms? I'm also thinking this because the war footage in the work is silent, while another kind of soundtrack by the harpist Emi Maeda fills the space, seeming to distance and sanitize the images even further.

ML: The piece discusses our motives regarding news. What role does the sensational value of war news play in our lives and society? Photojournalists participate in wars alongside snipers, risking their lives to capture dramatic and sometimes even aesthetically pleasing pictures of war. Via satellite TV and on the Internet we can get hold of images which our own national TV channels choose not to broadcast. These images are likely to be more shocking and show more cruelty.

But no matter how graphic the news coverage is, the images we see can never give us a proper idea of what war really feels like. Seeing your own sky filled with smoke from bombs is a terrifying experience, while seeing photography depicting the same event in a newspaper or in a video clip on TV is not. Without prior experience of such situations, we have to stretch our imagination to be able to come close to an understanding of it.

When I was adding the video material to the animated bubbles, I was surprised to notice that, as we increased the video's transparency and thus its visual ambiguity, the images became more powerful, scarier. The abstraction presented me with a degree of the unknown; what is unknown is dangerous: I can see that someone is shot, but it's difficult to form an idea of when, where and to whom it happens. So what may seem like an aesthetic choice is actually not. The intention is rather to make evident the very aestheticization of violence, an aspect of every war. +

Visitor's Voice

FRAME's Visitors' Program is a major way of expanding its international contact network and exchanges, as well as collaborative projects. Under the program dozens of curators, critics, art historians and scientists are invited to Finland annually to do research for upcoming articles, exhibitions and other projects. FRAME also collaborates with other institutions to facilitate research projects. Several visitors have given lectures and interviews or written articles during their visits. Each Framework includes a *Visitor's Voice* section, which presents some of this material.

Dr. Laura U. Marks is a media theorist and curator and Associate Professor in the School for the Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada. She is the author of *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Duke University Press, 2000) and *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media* (Minnesota University Press, 2002).

During her visit to Helsinki in March 2004 Dr. Marks gave a lecture at Fine Arts Academy Helsinki on haptic visuality, reflecting personally about the origins of this concept in the course of her career as a critic and theorist. The invitation allowed her to retrospectively read some of her writings over the past ten years and adumbrate their findings: so some of what follows consists of Dr. Marks' past writings with new commentary.

Laura U. Marks

Haptic Visuality: Touching with the Eyes

Haptic Criticism

I trace the origins of my understanding of haptic visuality to 1992. Working as a writer for *Afterimage*, the journal of independent media published in Rochester, New York, I had both been subjected to and subscribed to a dogma of political correctness. This period, the late 1980s and early 1990s, was the height of the critique of representation in North America. The editors I worked for at *Afterimage* believed that there is no reality outside of representation, and that 'beauty' is an ideological term and not to be used.

At the same time, as a graduate student, I was looking for an alternative to the dominant theory of the Gaze, derived from Lacanian psychoanalysis. I wanted to understand how looking could be something other than the exercise of power, and how to explain the pleasure of looking as not gendered, not perverse.

I was especially interested in minority cinema, i.e. work by immigrant, exile, and diaspora filmmakers and videomakers. It was here that I first saw works of political cinema that appealed to the senses, while questioning the instrumentality of vision. For example, the videos by Hopi artist Victor Masayesva seemed to deflect the gaze and only partially offer his culture for viewing. The well-known video by Palestinian artist Mona Hatoum, *Measures of Distance*, offered a kind of close-up vision of a woman's naked body (her mother in the bath) that invited contact more than distanced observation, across the distance of the family's exile. And in a short video called *Seeing Is Believing* by Canadian artist Shauna Beharry, the artist evokes the memory of her deceased mother not by looking at pictures of her but by conveying what it feels like to wear her sari. In this last work especially, it seemed that there was something struggling to be expressed that was too fragile to make it into the image. This fragility had to do with the movement between cultures, the loss and retranslation of meaning. It seemed to me that the meaning that was so important in

Seeing Is Believing could only survive if it were translated into another form: in this case, into touch.

As early as 1993 I wrote an essay called "The haptic critic" to be presented by fax at a symposium organized by Enes Fejzic at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris. Revised in 1995, years later it pretty much summarizes my position, and so I cite it in slightly condensed form here:

Several times in my work as a critic, I've found that something I initially loved and raved about comes back to haunt me in a barely recognizable form, a hardened, exaggerated, disfigured version of itself. What a feeling of dismay, when it *looks* like what so moved me and others before, but the life is gone. I'm sure readers have had the same experience: you notice something new and exciting and begin to try to name it, and then as soon as you have, the name lifts off the object and takes on a life of its own. For example, the way some of us got excited about the productive tension between image and text, and suddenly so many texts were spewing around that there was no time to look at the pictures. Or the way multiculturalism began as an exciting political movement and became the name of a policy for managing cultural difference. You can think of your own example of cultural haunting.

As critics and general cultural participants, how can we keep looking for the sources of life in what we observe? I have one idea, which I pray does not turn into its own ossified object. Consider haptic criticism.

Haptic criticism is a kind of criticism that assumes a tactile relation to one's object – touching, more than looking. The notion of the haptic is sometimes used in art to refer to a lack of visual depth, so that the eye travels on the surface of an object rather than move into illusionistic depth. I prefer to describe haptic visuality as a kind of seeing that uses the eye like an organ of touch. Pre-Socratic philosophers thought of perception in terms of a contact between the per-

(1) Deleuze and Guattari, "1440: The Smooth and the Striated," *A Thousand Plateaus*, 474-500.
(2) Ibid., 493.

ceived object and the person perceiving. Hence the haptic: looking, we touch the object with our eyes. This image might be a rather painful one, calling up raw, bruised eyeballs scraping against the brute stuff of the world. But I mean it to call up a way of seeing that does not posit a violent distance between the seer and the object, and hence cause pain when the two are brought together. In haptic visuality the contact can be as gentle as a caress.

Optical visuality, seeing things from enough distance to perceive them as distinct forms, depends on separation, on the viewing subject being separate from the object. We need it – to drive, to form judgments, to assess ourselves in the mirror, to build complicated theories of representation. But suppose we suspend for a moment the idea that this distance is always the case and always necessary. Our lover's skin seen an inch away becomes its own absorbing world, its gleam and pores and tiny hairs playing a delicate game of bas-relief.

What is haptic criticism, then? If criticism is observing something in order to form an opinion of it, haptic criticism observes, well, haptically, in close contact with its object. Haptic criticism is opposed to the notion that criticism bridges a chasm between thing and representation, or subject and object. Rather I see a continuum between the two, with the possibility of one becoming the other. The events that critics want to approach are endlessly complex and nuanced; their surfaces are rough, porous, spongelike. Written language is the process of attempting to translate events, conceived in the broadest possible way, into verbal expression. Our success is only asymptotic: at some point the words necessarily lift off the surface of the event and begin to do the things that words do best. Whether criticism is haptic, in touch with its object, is a matter of the point at which the words lift off. Haptic criticism keeps its surface rich and textured, so it can interact with things in unexpected ways. It has to be humble, willing to alter itself according to what it is in contact with. It has to give up ideas when they stop touching the other's surface.

This is hard to do: we critics love our ideas, we cherish them and forget that they become hard tools that chip at, or merely glance off without ever touching, the surface of the oth-

er. I once misread a passage by Eve Sedgwick in which she was calling for a multiplication of the number of axes we use to analyze culture, axes such as sexual difference, race, class: instead of abstract measurements of longitude and latitude, I imagined crude steel axes used to chop experience up into tiny pieces. But to continue the metaphor, if we measure by lots of small, nice units of measurement, our activity becomes less of a hacking away and more of a sort of all-over tingling. Fractal algorithms supply a very good model for the act of haptic criticism, because rather than staying on a flat plane (dimensions 2) they become so complex that they build into depth, attaining dimensions of 2.1 or 2.2 or so. Fractals fill up the space between two hierarchically related elements. Haptic criticism similarly is so sensitive to its object that it takes on a form of subtle complexity.

Optical seeing depends upon a center, a point in the brain or is it the soul, where the object, light carrying its image needle-like through the pupil, is reproduced. We reproduce the results of our observations at a place called the self deep within, while our surface remains intact. In haptic seeing, all our self rushes up to the surface to interact with another surface. When this happens there is a concomitant loss of depth – we become amoebalike, lacking a center, changing as the surface to which we cling changes. We cannot help but be changed in the process of interacting. We give up believing that meaning is formed after the fact, in our minds, and attribute power to create meaning to the interaction itself. In other words, we give up some of our power of self-determination in order to let the other transform us.

Our loss of center and subjectivity is thus a gain in subjectivity for the object. As our seeing comes closer to the surface, the object begins to see us from its own depth. Haptic criticism assumes that its object has aura – that it relates to me, looks back at me.

It is frightening to lose one's center, and it invites schizophrenia to give up passionately held beliefs in order to be transformed by the thing one interacts with. What if I find out too late that I don't want to be transformed in this way? How will I deal with comments that I have become shallow, or scattered, or horrors, have lost my politics?

There's no guarantee that I won't have to deal with those problems. I may have to recede back into optical distance from time to time, just to see what I have become. But let me recall that what I'm calling haptic criticism has long antecedents in other sorts of relationships. We have a tradition of losing ourselves in our object, which may come in handy when we lose our selves.

"The haptic critic" suggested an erotics of criticism: a combination of yielding to and challenging the object. It held that yielding need not be annihilating. This essay already laid out the basic points of haptic visuality, and its significance for the relation between viewing subject and viewed object. Retrospectively, I find some of its claims naive, but it was the ground for my research of the following several years into haptic visuality and its implications.

Haptic Visuality
The term *haptic* is used in psychology to indicate the tactile, proprioceptive, and kinesthetic senses. I arrived at it from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of "smooth space," a space that must be moved through by constant reference to the immediate environment, as when navigating an expanse of snow or sand.(1) Close-range space is navigated not through reference to the abstractions of maps or compasses, but by haptic perception, which attends to their particularity. Deleuze and Guattari's privileged agents of haptic perception are nomadic people, such as Bedouins and Inuit. They write, "It seems to us that the Smooth is both the object of a close vision par excellence and the element of a haptic space (which may be as much visual or auditory as tactile). The Striated, on the contrary, relates to a more distant vision, and a more optical space – although the eye in turn is not the only organ to have this capacity."(2)

In Deleuze and Guattari's opposition between smooth and striated, we hear a political distinction, between two ways of occupying space. Smooth space is lived in intimately, and you don't feel a strong distinction between yourself and your surroundings. This doesn't have to be the desert or the expanse of snow; smooth space can be your neighborhood, your home, your own rumpled bed. Striated space is di-

vided, striated, in order to conquer: if you take a distance on a space you can mark it out, map it, make it into territory. I hope you get a sense of the political stakes between these two kinds of visuality, haptic and optical, and the two kinds of space they intend, smooth space and striated space.

Optical visuality sees objects as distinct, distant, and identifiable, existing in illusionary three-dimensional space. It maintains a clear, crisp relationship between figure and ground. Optical visuality is necessary for distance perception: for surveying a landscape, for making fine distinctions between things at a distance. That's how the object of vision is constituted in optical visuality. The subject of vision – the beholder – is also conceived as discrete, as having solid borders that demarcate the beholder from the thing beheld. So you can see why optical visuality is needed, for example, for firing a missile. It conceives of the other, the object of vision, as distant and unconnected to the subject of vision. Optical visuality is necessary. But it's only half of vision.

Haptic visuality sees the world as though it were touching it: close, unknowable, appearing to exist on the surface of the image. Haptic images disturb the figure-ground relationship. The early twentieth-century Viennese art historian Alois Riegl borrowed the term from psychology, *haptein*, for a kind of vision that 'grabs' the thing it looks at. I think it's important that Riegl was a historian of textiles, and that he came up with this word when he was poring over his Persian carpets. These carpets with their endless, interleaved patterns don't allow the eye to rest in one place; they invite the eye to move along them, caressing their surface. Contemplating these patterns does something to dissolve the boundaries between the beholder and the thing beheld.

Riegl's teleological history of art narrates the demise of a physical tactility in art and the rise of illusionary, figurative space. He argued that Ancient Egyptian art created a haptic (physical) space, while in Greek art the optical (illusionary) was paramount. He described the transition from haptic to optical art in late Roman sculpture, painting, and metal works: optical images arose with the distinction of figure from ground, and the abstraction of the ground that

Elina Brotherus, *Brotherus, Girl*, 2003,
video still, 6'35.

made possible illusionistic figuration. I was struck by the similarity between the shimmering, uncertain depth of field in Roman metal work, as described by Riegl, and that of video, in which the tesselated surface creates a ground against which figures struggle to remain separate.

It is significant that this new valuation of abstract space coincided with the rise of dualism in religious thought, with the Barbarian invasion of the Roman Empire. The ancient ideal that the body could be a vehicle of spiritual grace gave way to the privileging of a soul distinct from the body. By contrast, haptic space relates to the image as object rather than illusionistic space for identification. So it appeals to a perception that is embodied and material. It is important that Riegl notes that 'the people of the west' were the agents of the new ideal space. Non-Western arts retained a certain materiality and concreteness that Riegl saw as regressive, but that I have revalued.

The term *haptic* had arisen a handful of times in the context of cinema before I explored it in *The Skin of the Film*. Noël Burch used the term to describe the "stylized, flat rendition of deep space" in early cinema; Antonia Lant similarly noted the confluence of Egyptian themes and "Egyptian" space in cinema of the 1910s. And Deleuze briefly referred to a shot in Bresson's *Pickpocket* as haptic. Cinema itself seems to have started off haptic. In its infancy, cinema oscillated between celebrating its material significance as an object and exploring its abstract representational power as im-

age. The early-cinema phenomenon of a "cinema of attractions" describes an embodied response, in which distanced identification with the action onscreen gives way to an immediate bodily response. Tom Gunning describes this phenomenon in the "serpentine dances" of Loie Fuller and her imitators, who performed in voluminous draperies that they swirled about themselves until they looked more like flowers or butterflies than like women.

I hazard a guess that cinema became more optical in its early years, the 1910s, as a result of industrial demands for narratives that were easy to understand. As the language of cinema became standardized, cinema appealed more to narrative identification than to body identification. Cinema became less mimetic, more symbolic. Cinema theory followed suit, arguing that movies are signs that can be analyzed like a language. For movies in which optical visuality dominates, this is true: everything we see can be isolated, identified, and its function in the film determined.

Above I noted a growing dissatisfaction with Lacanian and other psychoanalytic understandings of cinematic identification. I found that haptic visuality invites a kind of identification in which there is a mutual dissolving of viewer and viewed, subject and object; where looking is not about power but about yielding; or even that the object takes on more power than the subject. Haptic images push us out of cinema's illusionary depth and invite our eyes to linger on the surface of the image. Rather than

pull us into idealized space, they help us feel the connectivity between ourselves, the image and its material support, and the world to which the image connects us.

There is never a complete division between haptic and optical. Rather they slide into one another. For example, our vision moves from optical to haptic when we admire our lover. Haptic visuality has a strong sense of the material connection between vision and the object. It thus is mimetic: it presses up to the object and takes its shape. Mimesis is a form of representation based on contact, getting close enough to the other thing to become it. It is the complement of symbolic knowledge, in which representation is based on abstraction. We may think of different societies as having different ratios of mimetic knowledge and symbolic knowledge, a ratio that also changes over time.

Note the emergence of a set of parallel terms:

striated : smooth
distance : contact
figure : ground
optical : haptic
symbolic : mimetic

This set of parallel differences is beautifully evoked by Tran T. Kim-Trang, an American artist of Vietnamese origin, in her video *Alexia*. This is one tape in a seven-part work, "The Blindness Series". *Alexia* is about word blindness, a condition usually afflicting people with brain damage, in which they cannot perceive individual letters but can see whole

words, or vice versa. In the video, Tran delicately proffers Giambattista Vico's fable of the origin of language, which came into being like a thread stretched between gods and humans. Closest to the source of meaning in Vico's fable are the gods, who communicate in hieroglyphs but remain largely mute. Then come heroes, who speak in metaphors and are halfway between mute and articulate. Then humans, who speak in prose and are entirely articulate.

So then language evolved from gesture to speech, from poetry to prose. Vico's fable of the birth of language invokes a time when words and deeds were inseparably linked; humans' fall from grace, he suggests, is to have lost that intimate, material core of language. As we gain agency, we lose poetry.

In my emphasis on haptic visuality, I intended to stimulate a flow between the haptic and the optical that our culture is currently lacking. That vision should have ceased to be understood as a form of contact and instead become disembodied and adequated with knowledge itself is a function of European post-Enlightenment rationality. But an ancient and intercultural undercurrent of haptic visuality continues to inform an understanding of vision as embodied and material.

Note that an *image* itself can be haptic or optical, while haptic *visuality* is a term of reception. The viewer can choose, to some degree, whether to see optically or haptically: try taking off your glasses, or focusing on the windshield when you are driving, rather than the street beyond.

Denise Ziegler, *Still Life*, 2004, reconstructed situation. Photo by the artist.

Beyond Haptic Visuality

Since I first wrote about haptic images, they seem to have proliferated in both art and commercial media. Advertising especially seems more haptic than ever: television advertisements are getting a haptic cloak that pulls us close sensuously in order to sell us clothing, hamburgers, life insurance. I think popular cinema is more haptic than it used to be, including images that would have been radically experimental a decade ago. *Saving Private Ryan* uses a haptic opening scene to make us feel viscerally the brutality of war, and then diverts this affect to the goals of American patriotism. Music television and computer games are full of haptic images – or at least blurry, non-optical ones – but this does not prevent an instrumental relationship to them. So, I am less confident that haptic images necessarily invite a more yielding and intersubjective relationship between beholding subject and beheld object. Or if they do, it is often a yielding to ideology or to capitalism – suggesting that a strong, optical and critical subject is as necessary as ever!

Haptic images and haptic visuality, in order to have the kind of radical potential I saw in them, need to be *motivated* by something radical. This is why the intercultural cinema in which I first identified these images still seems to be a good example of motivation: it has a strong reason to protect its images from instrumental vision and yet to invite an intimate, sensuous, and memory-based relationship to them.

A second warning on the use of haptic criticism is: Avoid new-age touchy-feelyness! By this I mean that in the list of parallel terms above, such as 'optical : haptic', the terms on the left are not 'bad' and the terms on the right are not 'good.' What is good, as Deleuze and Guattari insisted about the smooth-striated dyad, is a lively dialectic or mutual deterritorialization between the two terms in each dyad. Optical vision, distance between subject and object, maps, language, symbols, and all such elements that striate the world's infinite flux, are necessary in a multitude of situations.

Similarly, it is popular for cultural critics nowadays, descendants of Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, to criticize the fascis-tic potential of a regimented, instrumental, 'optical' worldview. Yet a regime of knowledge in which tactility was supreme would have its own fascist tendency. In *The Man Without Qualities*, Robert Musil's encyclopedic novel set in Austria just before the Great War, there is a character, Hans Sepp, who is a caricature of a young nationalist. Young Sepp's pronouncements are a stew of spiritualism, free love, the cult of the body, ethnic purity, and other turn-of-the-century movements. The philosophies Sepp embraces are anti-instrumental, pro-tactile, anti-symbolic, pro-mimetic, and celebrate the merging of self and other. They are also, as Musil, writing in the late 1930s, recognized, philosophies that fed the power of the Nazi regime. And they are eerily echoed by present-day 'new age' thinking and some of its scholarly cousins.

My purpose in theorizing haptic visuality was not to condemn all vision as bent on mastery, *nor indeed to condemn all mastery*, but to open up visuality along the continua of the distant and the embodied, and the optical and the haptic. As I have already witnessed the appropriation of my haptic ideas for what seem to me proto-fascist, new-age celebrations of feeling, irrationality, and primordial ooze, I take advantage of this moment to beseech those who are newly encountering haptic thinking to keep alive the dialectic with the optical!

While I wrote *The Skin of the Film* and other works to draw attention to embodiment, it was always in the light of Drew Leder's reminder, in *The Absent Body*, that we humans need some distance from our body in order to function in the world. As in the Derridean critique of presence, a certain disembodiment is necessary. The goal of haptic and sensuous criticism is to enhance our human capacities, rather than entirely replacing critical distance with haptic intimacy. I suggest we embrace and cultivate all our perceptual and cognitive and feeling capacities, keeping in mind the meanings that motivate them. If there is a yielding in the haptic image, to what other are we yielding? If there is a relinquishment of knowledge and power, whose power does that serve? If there is a return to the precious knowledge of the body and the senses, what is that knowledge to be used for? +

Comment by Riikka Stewen

Mixed Media: Addressing the Senses of Touch and Vision

Still life is often regarded as the most haptic of the traditional genres; objects depicted in still-life paintings arouse an almost irresistible desire to touch them, even when we know that their existence is merely that of pigment and canvas. Samuel Pepys recorded his impressions of a flower still life in his diary of 1669, "...the finest thing that ever, I think, I saw in my life; the drops of dew hanging on the leaves, so as I was forced, again and again, to put my finger to it, to feel whether my eyes were deceived or no."

Simon Verelst, whose painting was the object of Pepys' desire, was also a virtuoso painter of grapes – the very fruit that has come to signify the apogee of trompe l'oeil illusionism in the Western tradition ever since Zeuxis.

Still life is a strange mélange of the optic and the haptic; objects seem to be both close at hand and at a distance, behind the veil of paint. The dialectics of distance and proximity in still-life painting perfectly match the Benjaminian experience of an aura, the sudden revelation of distance in that which is close by.

If seeing and looking are composed of both "opticality" and "hapticality" – if seeing is understood also in the sense of a chiasmatic intertwining of the seer and the seen in the flesh of the world, as Merleau-Ponty suggested, not as simple mastery over the seen – then perhaps the tradition of still life might serve as a laboratory for showing how the haptic still inhabits opticality in the Western history of vision.

It is believed that the first still-life paintings continued the Roman tradition of *xenia*, baskets of fresh fruit and food given to guests who stayed overnight; in still life, the tangibility and tactile sensuousness of *xenia* were sheltered and conveyed in a different, virtual medium, one of the arts of memory.

In the Modernist tradition, the medium itself became the focus of reflection, but it was not considered possible to convey anything with the medium: the medium could only convey itself. The tautological nature of the

Modernist enterprise led artists and critics to emphasise the pure, optical qualities of vision, and in the 1960s the minimalists were still struggling to "get rid of" everything they considered extraneous to the object, identifiable with the pure medium, and its "single quality".

Modernity and the end of the arts of memory led to the conflation of the medium and that which was to be remembered in it; the modern gaze was theorised as single, optical and incorporeal, like the photographic camera. Even the Lacanian paradigm of the gaze remains photographic in this sense.

Rosalind Krauss invented "medium-specificity" in the late 1990s in order to salvage the remains of the pure Modernist medium, but, notwithstanding the various dematerialised practices, mixed media is most often the medium encountered in contemporary art. The Oxford English Dictionary gives a lovely example of the usage of the term 'mixed media' in the early 1990s, " a huge, mixed-media construction composed [!] of ventilator shafts, mirrors, and glass panes". Considering that the origins of mixed media are in Dadaism and Environmental Art, it is immediately clear that when artists and critics speak about mixed media, they are either using it as short-hand for the sake of convenience, or else they are attempting to make the something thus described more respectable as art. Mixed media signifies that ventilator shafts are to be treated as art, that they can be the medium of art – of even 'high' art. I doubt the Dadaists spoke about mixed media; they were not inclined to preserve the purity of art.

For the purists, there has to be a medium, or many media with their attendant specificities, which can then be mixed to make multi-media – according to one art dictionary, multimedia is synonymous with mixed media. Without the *a priori* purity of the media, there can hardly be art that is purely art.

Before modernity, no one imagined art to be pure, nor was it considered intellectually or artistically daring to pronounce that painting – its medium – consists of colours arranged on a flat surface. Nevertheless, some genres in the academic tradition were esteemed higher than others, historical paintings ranking highest and still life occupying the lowest positions, according to the value of the subject matter. Still life was also seen as the most susceptible of the traditional genres to mixing with things external to art. This non-art disposition of still life was due to the allegedly insignificant amount of artistic and intellectual labour required in the making; no *inventio*, no *dispositio*, no *disegno* was needed, one could just transfer a fragment of the visible world onto the canvas, as it were. In this regard, still life represented an early form of assemblage or environmental art, constantly negotiating the borders of art and non-art.

Art historians analysing 20th-century art from the perspective of academic genres have seen abstract art as a continuance of the high-art tradition of history painting. We could also say that the still-life attention to objects of the world continues in the avant-garde anti-art tradition initiated in Dadaist and surrealist assemblages and *objets trouvés*. The grand narratives of video installations and projections, no matter how fragmented or 'deconstructed', have certainly inherited the psychological and humanist ambitions of history painting. And in a sense, mixed media still covers everything that hardly has a name, like the term 'still life' which replaced the earlier flowers, tulips, bodegone, banketje, hunting-dogs, forest floors, monkeys and parrots in the 18th century.

Why this exercise in *l'histoire à longue durée?* Maybe just to try and counterbalance a little the adulation of the new... The value of novelty and innovation seems today more unquestionable than ever, to the extent that

we lose sight of the fact that by innovation we often mean something that has recently become or been made marketable. Already in *La condition postmoderne*, Lyotard analysed how marketability was becoming the sole criterion by which to judge information – information having replaced knowledge and truth.

Information can be easily mathematised and digitised; it can use nearly anything as its medium, once the principle of translation is agreed upon. In ancient Mesopotamia clay figurines were used for logistical purposes, and in Marshall McLuhan's example, the Roman centurion used pebbles to count the men at his command. The centurion needed to command 100 men, not 107 or 95; his purpose was clear and evident. In art, meaning is never so unequivocal and the medium with its opacities is always part of the message. The blur at the edges of art – the prevalence of mixed-media still life – therefore signifies that art is still many things, impure and contaminated with mixed intentions and purposes. If the message is unequivocal and can be translated into digits, we are talking about information.

Still life/mixed media, for long occupying the *parergon* in art, is such a case, with tangibility and optical illusionism fusing together to address both our desire to touch and our ability to think. For Pepys, the optical illusion needed to be tested by touch; touch confirmed that the drops were not real – the beauty of this epistemological reversal should not escape us. Touch can make us think and see, which goes a long way in deconstructing the opposition of distance and proximity projected on the axis of seeing and touching. The question posed by and in the drops of dew on the canvas was not resolved in any simple way; is it not this insistent "again and again" recorded by Pepys that keeps alive the critical power of art – the power to address our ability to think through senses? +

Opinions, Analyses & Letters

Opinions, Analyses & Letters offers a forum for both invited and submitted texts by those in the fields of art and science, to discuss different perspectives on cultural criticism as well as institutional and cultural policies. In *Framework 2*, experts from different countries have provided statements and examples commenting on the general theme of *Innovation and Social Space.*

Maarten Hajer, Professor of Public Policy and Arnold Reijndorp, an independent consultant, discuss the debate on heritage and social space; Harri Veivo, literature researcher, and Pasi Mäenpää, urban sociologist, analyse the concept of city; the philosopher Jonathan Lahey Dronsfield asks in the second part of his article why contemporary thinking seems to have turned towards ethics. Paula Toppila, curator and critic, talks via e-mail with Mary Jane Jacob, independent curator and critic, about the concept and practices of public art. And finally, *Framework* asked Kai Wartianen, an architect and Professor of Urban Planning, about a practical dilemma confronting HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme.

Markus Henttonen's (b. 1976) photographic series *Paral-lel City* from 2001–2004 (on pages 85-97) investigates the relationship between people and urban environments. The series *Proxima Station* shows the subway, where people can withdraw into themselves from the hectic life surrounding them. *Skateboarding Allowed* concentrates on a subculture whose practitioners create their own styles and ways of using their surroundings. Crowded tourist beaches are the main subject of the series *To Be on View*, photographed directly from above. People make up all sorts of groupings and conglomerations. The photos show the entire beach at one go, allowing us to see what dozens of people are doing at the moment they are photographed. For further information see www.markushenttonen.com.

Next page: Markus Henttonen, *Letters*, 2001, from the series *Paral-lel City*, chromogenic digital print, 50 x 70 cm, edition of 6; ink print on canvas 125 x 170 cm, edition of 3.
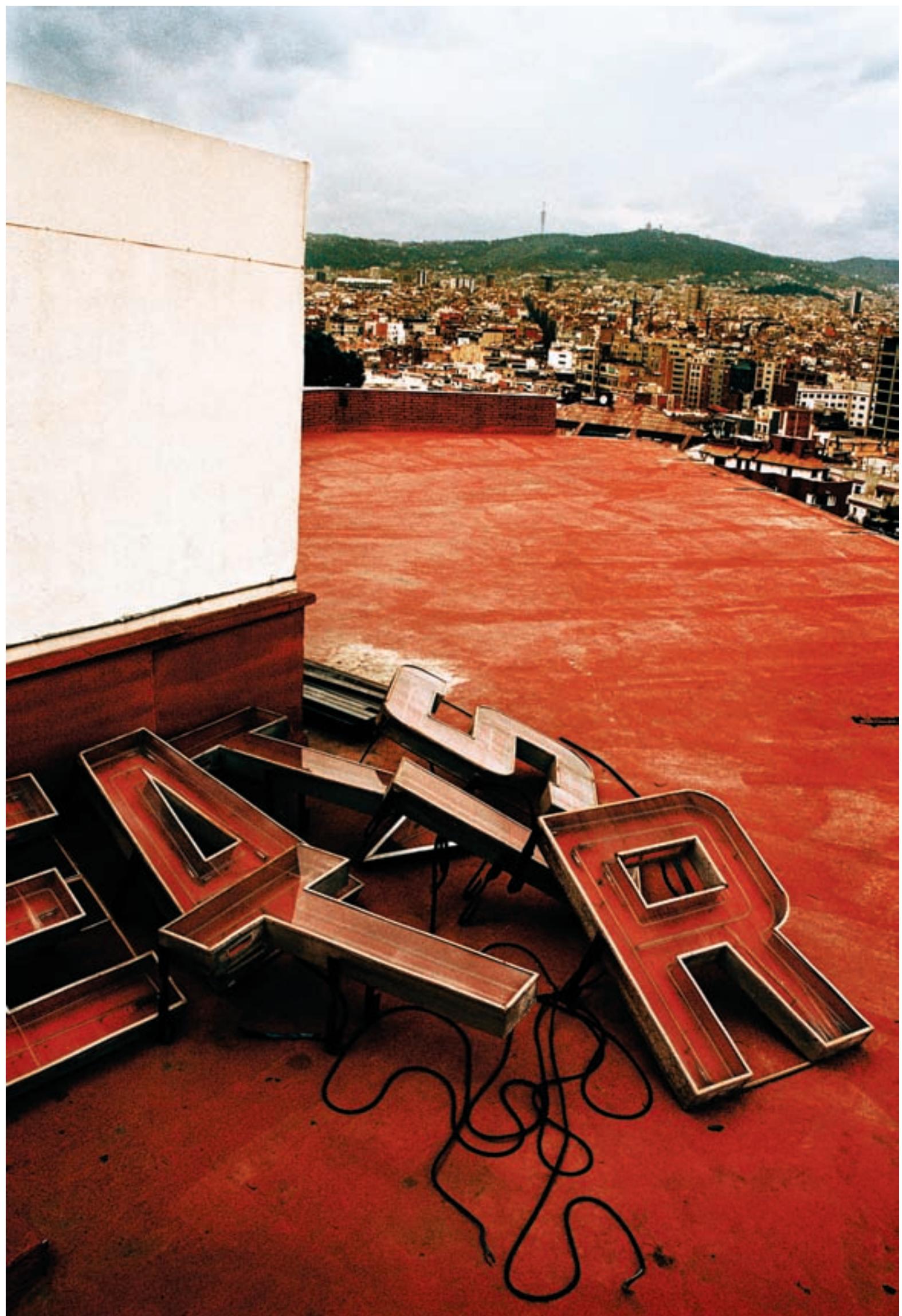
Maarten Hajer is Professor of Public Policy at the University of Amsterdam, Arnold Reijndorp is an independent consultant based in Rotterdam.

Maarten Hajer & Arnold Reijndorp

Heritage Discourse and Public Space[1]

The Historicist Innercity

Anybody interested in the future of historic innercities has to visit Salzburg. Respectable visitors to Salzburg dutifully follow the little 'park & ride' signs that bring them directly to what surely is one of the most beautiful multi-storey carparks in Europe. It is located inside the Mönchberg that divides Salzburg in two. You drive in from one side in your car, ascend the spiral ramp inside the rock until you have found a parking space, and after a short ride in a hi-tech lift you step out into the open air on the other side of the Mönchberg as a pedestrian. You drive in via streets where pedestrians, cars and lorries jostle for space, and walk out into the midst of the magnificent quiet of the old 'Bürgerstadt' of Salzburg. Here Gothic, late Renaissance and Baroque architecture compete for aesthetic supremacy in what tourist brochures describe as 'The Rome of the North'. The visiting urban planner begins to water at the mouth on seeing the astonishing way that one square opens out into another, at the contrast between the dark Medieval streets and the flashing beams of sunlight that illuminate them, and the endless succession of astounding vistas of new facades, fountains, galleries and arcades.

Salzburg is Europe's answer to Disneyland. Perhaps the future of the European city really does lie in the consistent design(ing) of the city centre as a leisure park for the tourist, as Deyan Sudjic suggested. Salzburg presents itself as an '*Erholungsausflug*', a 'recreational escape' from modern life and in terms of cultural-political strategy is utterly consistent with the policy of the big amusement parks. In Salzburg's old Bürgerstadt tourists can lose themselves in daydreams about Mo-

zart's Salzburg or mellifluous memories of Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music*, according to taste. The cultural policy in Salzburg's Bürgerstadt is an acknowledgement of certain phenomena, sometimes typically urban ones, as being a hindrance to the stimulation of economic growth (such as mixed zoning, overlapping social environments, or the ethics of urban restraint – Goffman's "dimming of the headlights"). Simultaneously the policy recognizes that there are other elements, sometimes not present initially, that are the key to success: controllability, predictability, and the functionalization of the urban space for one specific purpose: consumption by tourists.

The application of amusement-park concepts to the city brings to life precisely what Michael Sorkin most dreaded in the ascendancy of amusement parks: "The amusement park presents its jolly regulated vision of pleasure as a substitute for the democratic public space, and succeeds in doing this by ridding the city of its sting: the presence of the poor, of crime, dirt and work. In the 'public' space of the amusement park or the covered shopping centre, even the freedom of speech is limited: there are no demonstrations in Disneyland." (Sorkin 1992, p. xv)

Admittedly, the traffic-free innercity, the strictly controlled cityscape and the policy of revitalization, and the active dream-machine, for example in the guise of little trips in calèches, perhaps with slightly tipsy coachmen in Renaissance costumes, make Salzburg a perfect city for tourist consumption. The tourist leaves the stress of the ever-accelerating society behind in the spiral of the carpark and experiences the entrance into the old Bürger-

stadt as a timewarp. It is a simulacrum of an early urban space, complete with cobblestones and devoid of neon advertising and asphalt, with stately coffee houses, and boutiques with buffed parquet floors and window-blinds of stretched toile. Exactly as the British sociologist John Urry described, here you can observe how consumption has for a long time no longer been limited to the familiar touristy consumer goods, such as '*Mozartkugeln*' or other chocolate delights. Here the coffee houses, restaurants and theatres, even an entire city centre, are mobilized for tourist consumption (Urry 1995). When you reflect on the development of Salzburg's old Bürgerstadt as the typification of an ideal, there is only one difference between a traditional amusement park and a tourist city such as Salzburg: for Disneyland you pay an admission fee as you enter; in Salzburg you pay when you leave the carpark.

The example of Salzburg almost epitomises a particular discourse on the future of the historic innercity: that of historicism. The way forward is to turn back. All the remnants of the past are screened for their symbolic power. Those buildings that were seen as obstacles in the 1970s are now the core – or rather the front – of a new strategy of revitalization. This is an obvious and promising strategy. Innercities have to safeguard their economic and sociocultural future in the coming years and by recognizing historic artefacts as assets the historic centres make a strength of what used to be seen as a weakness: limited car-accessibility, smallness, and seemingly erratic layouts. But historicism is not unproblematic. As Rem Koolhaas, reflecting on his experiences all over the globe, put it in his cultbook *S,M,L,XL*

(1995): "There is always a quarter called lipservice, where a minimum of the past is preserved… Its phone booths are either red and transplanted from London, or equipped with small Chinese roofs. Lipservice – also called Afterthought, Waterfront, Too Late, 42nd Street, simply the village, or even Underground is an elaborate mythic operation: it celebrates the past as only the recently conceived can. It is a machine (…) History returns not as farce here, but as service. Costumed merchants (funny hats, bare midriffs, veils) voluntarily enact the conditions (slavery, tyranny, disease, poverty, colony) that their nation once went to war to abolish." (Koolhaas 1995: 1256-7).

What does it mean to mobilize the past? Does it make the city into a theme park? Is the city turning into a historic residential enclave for the well-to-do? Is the city essentially becoming a thematized 'mall'? And, last but not least, what are the consequences for urban society and the public domain if the morphological heart of the city has to beat at the pace of the days that have past? It is particularly this latter question that I want to focus on here. What role is there for the historic innercity as a public space?

Historic Innercities as Public Domain?

For analytical purposes it makes sense to distinguish public space from the public domain. Public space refers to physical spaces that are not private, i.e. that are open to the public. The public domain can then be reserved for those public spaces that do fulfil a particular social function. We define 'public domain' as those places where an exchange between different social groups is possible and also actually occurs. The public domain is thereby a guid-

ing ideal: it is a perspective from which we want to analyze the existing public space, because no matter how often lip service is paid to the objectives and desirability of a public domain, places only rarely seem to actually function in this way.

The public domain is the subject of a lively and complex debate. After all, the term public domain is not only used to refer to the physical places in the city, but also has a broader political and philosophical meaning. Philosophers such as Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas have often written about the 'public sphere' in society, and others also employ the term 'public domain' in a broader context.

City centres are of course no longer automatically the centre of social integration. We live in the era of the network society in which people use space 'à la carte'. Our consumption of spaces follows erratic patterns. We move from the residential enclave to the business park, from the leisure centre to the shopping mall, from nature reserve to brain park, from the multiplex cinema back to the neighbourhood. City centres are no longer necessarily the central core within the field, but as 'condensations' they are comparable to new concentrations, which increasingly exhibit a combination of living, working and 'leisure' facilities, just like the old centres.

In this network structure historic innercities have their own place. They too are places for occasional consumption, be it for the Sunday shopping stroll or the enlightening cultural experience – especially when it concerns a foreign innercity. This has been well recognized by policy makers. They are reinventing city centres all over Europe, but with what idea in mind? The problem of the historicist approach is that the public domain is hardly a guiding perspective. The combination of historicist production and tourist consumption propels another type of city. The eye of the tourist forces cityscapes to adjust. As soon as a place – whether it be an innercity, an industrial monument, a historically interesting building, an untouched village green or a characteristic landscape – attracts the attention of the tourist industry, project developers or 'city promoters', it is threatened by expropriation. Cities, buildings and landscapes are adapted to satisfy the 'eye of the tourist' (Urry 1990). The original multitude of meanings is then usually reduced to one: that of the promotional brochure.

Salzburg is not the only example of a city where the organization of tourism has led to a marked dominance by touristic meaning. Interestingly, it is not so much a case of closing off public space, but rather of complete occupation of that space with programmed meanings. All too often, the optimal consumption of a specific place seems to assume a more or less complete freedom from interference: those who shape their identities by walking the long-distance footpaths in the urban field, do not want to be disturbed by artefacts of modern life in their purposeful experience of nature, new or not.

In our opinion, locations are to be considered a public domain when different groups of people have an interest in those locations. When this is the case, the resilience of these groups often proves to be strong. The social geographer Goheen also describes the relation of the public to public space as "space to which it attributes symbolic significance and asserts claims… Citizens create meaningful public space by expressing their attitudes, asserting their claims and using it for their own purposes… The process is a dynamic one, for meanings and uses are always liable to change. Renegotiation of understandings is ongoing; contention accompanies the process." (Goheen 1998) Yet to what extend do we design the historic innercities with that idea in mind?

Tensions

The historicist innercity fits into a broader politics of the production of places. Recent years have seen an unprecedented increase in interest in the deliberate consumption of places and 'events'. That is a consequence of the substantial expansion of the middle class in developed countries. Influenced by this ever more dominant middle class, there are at least two related trends that have become prominent in the cultural geography of the urban field: the conscious consumption of 'cultural' experiences and the conscious avoidance of confrontations with the proverbial 'other' in daily life. These two trends seem to be seamlessly connected/aligned, but in reality they are at odds with each other. Isn't the pursuit of confrontation with what is 'other' or 'foreign' the ultimate cultural experience?

Markus Henttonen, *Picnic Table*, 2004, from
the series *Paral-lel City # II*, chromogenic digi-
tal print, 50 x 70 cm, edition of 6.

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A phenomenon that has mushroomed in recent years concerns the desire of the ordinary citizen to have 'interesting' experiences. Leisure scholars talk about an 'experience market', where all kinds of events are offered that can excite people for a short time, from factory sales to art biennials. We find an example of the conscious consumption of places in cultural tourism. Cities and organizations compete with other places by producing experiences. The success of exhibitions is currently measured by the degree to which they are an 'event', i.e. develop into mass crowd-pullers of international importance. And cities now need to be approachable as an event too: Kassel during the *Dokumenta*, Avignon has its festival, and some twenty cities have now been 'the cultural capital of Europe'.

This mass cultural consumption indicates how the definition of places is directly related to the mobilization of cultural heritage; with the orchestrated production and marketing of cultural events. But this production of experiences and 'events' only functions thanks to the urge for social and cultural mobility: the fact that people develop an identity by attending this kind of event or place. Being present or sharing in this deserves a highlighted entry in one's personal biography (see Hitzler 1988, Hitzler & Honer 1994). Whoever is able to secure a ticket not only has access to the exhibition, but also, it would seem, has gained admission to a cultural elite and gained a building block of a lifestyle shared with it. People also turn out to be exceptionally mobile in the spatial sense, in order to participate in this collective congestion. Typically, they then bemoan the event's 'growing' popularity. As yet, they refuse to acknowledge that the putative cultural elite itself became a mass a long time ago (see Bell 1978).

In a certain sense, the popular focus on the consumption of experiences is a worry for metropolitan administrators and entrepreneurs. The unstoppable demand for new and different experiences means that producers have to continually update and revise their 'formula'. However, it is not at all easy to re-invent a city: it is costly, and the discourses according to which the reinvention takes place tend to be the basis for the reinvention of cities elsewhere, with a remarkable similarity between cities as the unintended result. Moreover, the individual importance that people attach to attending cultural events in the city is at odds with their fear of certain other negative forms of urban congestion. The patterns of this avoidance of congestion are in fact just as important for defining cultural geography. Sociologist Ulrich Beck (1986, 1993) thinks that the most important change in modern society right now is the displacement of social conflicts about the distribution of 'goods' by those about the distribution of 'bads', supposed or actual. In the final decades of the twentieth century, society was forced to deal with the inadvertent by-products of modernization. New social conflicts often revolve around the sharing of the negative aspects of modernization, such as rubbish dumps, crime, new infrastructure (from HST routes to airport runways and motorways), asylum-seeker centres, or sheltered facilities for drug addicts.

The picky consumption of space thus has, on the one hand, focused on the massive increase in 'events' and positive places and, on the other hand, on the equally massive avoidance of all kinds of negative aspects of social progress. When people go shopping or go out on the town they want to be entertained; not alarmed. In the sphere of the home, we see a growing tendency towards creating a distance from the urban problems and the groups associated with them. All this indicates that the growing middle class primarily uses the urban field in order to separate itself off along social lines, and that exchanges between different social groups occur less often.

In the network society everyone puts their own city together. And so too does each citizen select his own public domain. This naturally touches on the essence of the concept of the public domain. If the modern city can best be understood as a collection of landscapes, and if the citizen is constantly occupied in keeping his own small network intact with as little friction with other groups as possible, then that does seem to mean the death of any form of public domain. But that is not what the individual space of the archipelago resident actually looks like.

The core of successful public space thus lies not so much in the shared use of space with others, let alone in 'meeting' them, but rather in the opportunities that urban proximity offers for a 'shift' of perspective: through the experience of otherness one's own casual view of reality gets some competition from other views and lifestyles. That shift of perspective, however, is not always a pleasant experience. Take the famous example of Baudelaire's *The Family of Eyes* (see Jukes 1990), which concerns the experiences of a young couple who are confronted with the staring eyes of street urchins while sitting in front of one of the gas-lit restaurants on the corner of one of the new Parisian boulevards. Their appearance in the bright light shatters the self-determined *mise en scène* of romance and happiness and makes the presence of the man and his children a problem. The other Paris shows itself and the perspective shifts. It is a public-domain experience *par excellence*, but not a happy one.

Those who have a soft spot for the public domain must account for the fact that many places that bring together a great diversity of members of the public are currently designed, very deliberately, as 'zero-friction' environments, as friction-free space. The design is dictated by the avoidance of friction and successful playing on the imagination. The functionalization of city centres for the benefit of tourist consumption has not penetrated everywhere quite as far as it has in Salzburg. However, here in Holland too plans are being devised to stage city centres as friction-free spaces. One of the means to this end is the system of the 'speaking facade'. Tourists in the smaller cities in the country's western provinces (Haarlem, Leiden, Gouda, Delft) will have a chance to 'roam' from one historical facade to another, wearing headphones with a radio link, pumping their ears full of all kinds of information about the historic city. In essence, this not only shuts out the outside world, but also implements a system that orchestrates the most ideal of touristic corridors. The least we can do is make sure that the functional relationships of a multitude of publics to the historic innercities remain intact. +

Harri Veivo

City After State, the Closed Eye of an Insect

What would happen to the city, should the nation state withdraw? What would happen to political event if *polis*, the city, disintegrated? To use these dull and hackneyed words: in the postmodern, global era?

In his poem *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* – the paradigmatic piece of American postmodernism – John Ashbery writes about the city:

(…)
We have seen the city; it is the gibbous
Mirror eye of an insect. All things happen
On its balcony and are resumed within,
But the action is the cold, syrupy flow
Of a pageant. (…)

The poetic image captures the abundance of visual stimuli in the modern city, the multiplicity of viewpoints the city generates, like the eye of an insect. Yet it also suggests the disparity between experience and deed, the control and distance of modernity, the view from a balcony down onto the pageant of history. *Post*modernity is defined by the tenses: we have seen the city. Maybe it no longer exists; nor the pageant of history. It has been replaced by terrorism. Or, not replaced, but stricken, rather, and will soon be struck again.

The war against terrorism is a success, of course, if for nothing else than bringing us all things to watch and read. The strikes (9/11, Madrid, and the others, where were they? Australia-Indonesia: the farther away, the easier to forget; but what *is* 'farther'? – That's the whole point!) are followed by the obligatory repertoire of epilogues: the search for leads, the discovery and arrest of the perpetrators (if we are lucky), interviews with the victims' families, stories of heroism and omission, as well as political rhetoric, of course, with its reassurance of perseverance and demonstrations of international support.

These very things are in fact important, to us. Using their public image, their rhetoric, and their persona, politicians in the target country must be able to deal with the flood of questions, arguments, and emotions that follow in the wake of a strike. That is where José Maria Aznar failed, and where the Bush administration is fumbling. A strike turns politics into a mandatory and archaic drama, revealing the shallowness of postmodern image politics. Till the strike itself has been succeeded by the defence of historical values, the clash of cultures, the duty to defend democracy, and other similar discourses: foreign policy becomes an internal affair, and domestic policy becomes foreign policy. Easily visualised, rhetorically effective, the story replaces the event and reinstates the image.

That is not the issue here, however. Distance is. The epilogues of terrorist attacks – which in reality are their principal scenes – often take place in suburbia, in the 'rurban' area between the city and the countryside, the residential blocks of banality. The attacks on the WTC and in Madrid lead back to perfectly ordinary residential blocks, in perfectly ordinary cities.

They are both far and near. Our symbolic abode still retains its roots in the 19th century, in the age of nationalism and the modern metropolis. In our imagination, we still live in cities of monuments and historical events, surrounded by national landscapes. Yet in the material reality, our bodies move in posturban spaces, a new suburbia, rurban villages that belong to the city: shopping malls, parking lots, ring roads – the dwelling places, not in the targets, of terrorism.

In this respect, WTC was radically different to Madrid. The first was an attack against a symbolic nexus of power, the latter against a banal, yet necessary space for everyday life. The strikes were also totally different on the level of mental imagery and visual discourse. Hollywood had paved the way by teaching us to watch catastrophes happening at a single, symbolically charged place. The strikes, and ensuing smoke, flames, and collapse of the WTC towers, were a perfect fit for the aesthetic code of catastrophes. Madrid, on the other hand, was a decentralised, yet devastating strike that had no visual precedent and therefore never turned into a spectacle. The news flashes only showed what had already happened, in several locations at once, without any symbolic pivot to the event.

The latest trend in urban research is to declaim the end of the metropolis. The city is disintegrating, becoming depopulated, swelling past its shape and merging with the countryside, communication technology is making urban populations redundant, cities are usurped by danger that drives people into gated communities, tourists are making the life of ordinary citizens intolerable, gentrification is wiping out the working class and destroying the city's heterogeneity, and so on.

Wave goodbye, for modernity is fast receding. Goodbye, Georg! Where now is the identity-liberating flow of humanity you saw in Berlin? Goodbye to you, too, Charles! A pity, but Walter was right: you were the last lyrical poet in the age of capitalism, and a totally new kind of capital is breathing its foul breath down our necks!

The development of the modern state, economy, and city was a single process in which these three areas all supported each other – against their very nature – but which has now reached its conclusion. History could be written thus: for the modern state to develop, it had to lose the autonomy of late Medieval and Renaissance city-states. Where the cities were strong and many, the development was slow: Belgium, Germany, Italy. To offset the loss of cities, the state elevated one of them over all others: the capital. But the economy was already gnawing at the system even as it was being set up. Having sloughed off the gold standard, money has no need for a material point of reference. And, in a global economy, it needs ever fewer material places of exchange. Robbing a national bank is another fantasy that is receding fast. Even an ordinary bank will soon be a rarity, and it is seldom you see any real money in there.

However, individual freedom and its attendant responsibilities are fundamentally urban phenomena. The city freed the individual from feudal relationships and from the shackles of religion (but not of religion itself, of course). At the same time, it created an awareness of collective equality; if by no other means, then by means of inequality, whose feudal and theological basis crumbled in the city.

Let us return to terrorism. It is possible that every form of society has its own form of violence. The city-state tortured and let people languish in gaol. Violence for the purpose of maintaining order meant the elimination of individuals. The concentration camp was invented by the nation state. The state rested on the people, and to be absolute, the people had to be 'pure'. Now we have terrorism. Why?

As an experiential environment, the postmodern – posturban – city is fundamentally different from the modern city: instead of an endless, overwhelming flow of influences, we now have monotony, dullness, loneliness, banality. Ring roads, parking lots, endless residential districts and industrial areas. The spectacle whose stage used to be the street has now moved over to the media. This is why any deed aiming at political change must dazzle, from the media perspective. That is why a terrorist can also disappear in the city/suburb, into the banal ordinariness that lies behind the scenes – behind television – which is not categorized as an area of the gaze.

Thanks to this duality of spectacle and the invisible, a strike can spark off a Manichean logic of change, tougher measures, or total change and – only time will tell – perhaps even a Schmittian state of emergency. In the posturban age, which is also the age of terrorism, a political act needs to make an impression. It aims to achieve, not an uprising, but better viewer ratings, and thereby bring the political spectacle to a climax, which it tries to pressure into *anagnorisis*, but which in re-

Markus Henttonen, *Football Field*, 2004, from
the series *Paral-lel City # II*, chromogenic digital
print, 40 x 50 cm, edition of 10.

Next page, top left: Markus Henttonen, *Streets*,
2001, from the series *Paral-lel City*, chromogenic
digital print, 50 x 70 cm, edition of 6; ink print
on canvas 125 x 170 cm, edition of 3.

Next page, top right: Markus Henttonen,
Camisay, 2001, from the series *Paral-lel City*,
chromogenic ink print, 50 x 70 cm, edition of 6.

ality is, precisely because of such forcing, only a prolonged blindness.

And at the same time, the media make us to witness images of archaic violence, of humiliating the enemy. We are indeed receding from the modern, but not forwards.

According to the French writer François Bon, the vocabulary of the modern city is irredeemably dated. Instead of words like 'centre', 'periphery' and others denoting geometry and control, we must speak of caves, cavities, and porosity in sentences expressing opacity and cloudiness.

The contemporary city – if the word 'contemporary' can still be used – is not a space for a *flâneur*. The *flâneur* maintains his critical distance, because he can escape and disappear in the crowd. In a postmodern city, no crowds remain outside of shopping malls. Instead of the heterogenic, identity-consuming yet liberating mass of 'la foule' (remember Simmel), we now have the indifference of the highway tinged with a technologised competition for social status waged with prestige and the power of one's car. And behind the noise barrier begins a territory, be it middle-class semi-detached houses or a working-class suburb, that is reigned over by a group. Territorial identity does not favour anonymity. Whosoever

does not belong to the group is an eyesore, as tain on the landscape, someone whose movements are kept under surveillance.

We thus move from one cavity to the next, from the highway's modern state of movement, control and anonymity, to a territory that is as opaque to the stranger as he is a glaring exception himself. Of course, we live in a postmodern age when, allegedly, identities can be changed like shirts. But it is a mistake to assume that things would be developing at the same rate even within the space of a single city. The disintegrating urban fabric is not only a spatial phenomenon, it has a structural social dimension as well. Archaic group commitment runs alongside the postmodern game as if it were a simultaneous, yet fundamentally different segment in the texture of space. The insect has closed its eyes.

Is it any longer a city at all? The question has been given a lot of thought. It is obvious that traditional notions of 'polis' and 'cité' as a shared space of public political action are not appropriate in the present circumstances. Decisions on shared issues are now made in cabinets and in the media. Direct demagoguery transporting the crowds is a hopelessly anachronistic idea. At the same time, control over space, both the relationship between the strange and the propri-

etorial and its dark side, violence, have changed utterly. Encounters with strangeness in the posturban city take the form of sudden appearance and aggression, a belch in the face between two passing individuals, without reason or consequences, just as in Peter Handke's book *The Left-Handed Woman*. Alternatively, it is wariness, staring, a watchdog's bark that does not stop until the stranger has left the territory.

What can be done, if we wish to have political change? We cannot shout "À la Bastille!" Power no longer has a single domicile in the city; it is decentralised and stronger than before, safe behind the threshold that separates action from image and text. We cannot shout anything. Nor is there any longer a mass for revolt. The thought is unacceptable, but the fearsome truth may well be that the posturban development of state and the city has made terrorist strikes a necessity.

Goodbye to you, too, Franz, who lived out your days around Alexanderplatz! You were saved by pity, a thing that was an odd vestige from the past already in your lifetime; we have succeeded in irrevocably hoisting it upon society, and hardly anything of it survives, for that matter. Get thee to therapy and stop loitering!

The birth of the modern city saw also the birth of modern literature, and its main concern: what is man, when identity is dislodged from traditional theological and social structures, entering a new diversity, the space of game and technology, which is also joy, obscurity, indifference? Madness is an essential element in these works. It tells us about what lies beyond humanity, but also how people react to the madman; it tells us about the possibilities of concern and pity.

Is Moosbrugger, the mad murderer in Musil's *Man Without Qualities*, human at all? He cannot put together words and thoughts like the rest of us, but maybe it is precisely because of that inability that he is more human, more natural, perhaps beyond judgement. But the idea itself – is it dangerous to society? At what point does pity become madness?

Our age demands of us a courage to understand terrorism, to understand what it is in a terrorist attack that appeals to the aesthetic sense and touches upon the fringes of justice. It is possible that ethics is a spatial phenomenon: its abstract content can become reality only in concrete, tangible action. In the 21st century, the majority of mankind lives in cities, but cities are not what they used to be. Places change. The universal content of ethics is in dire straits. +
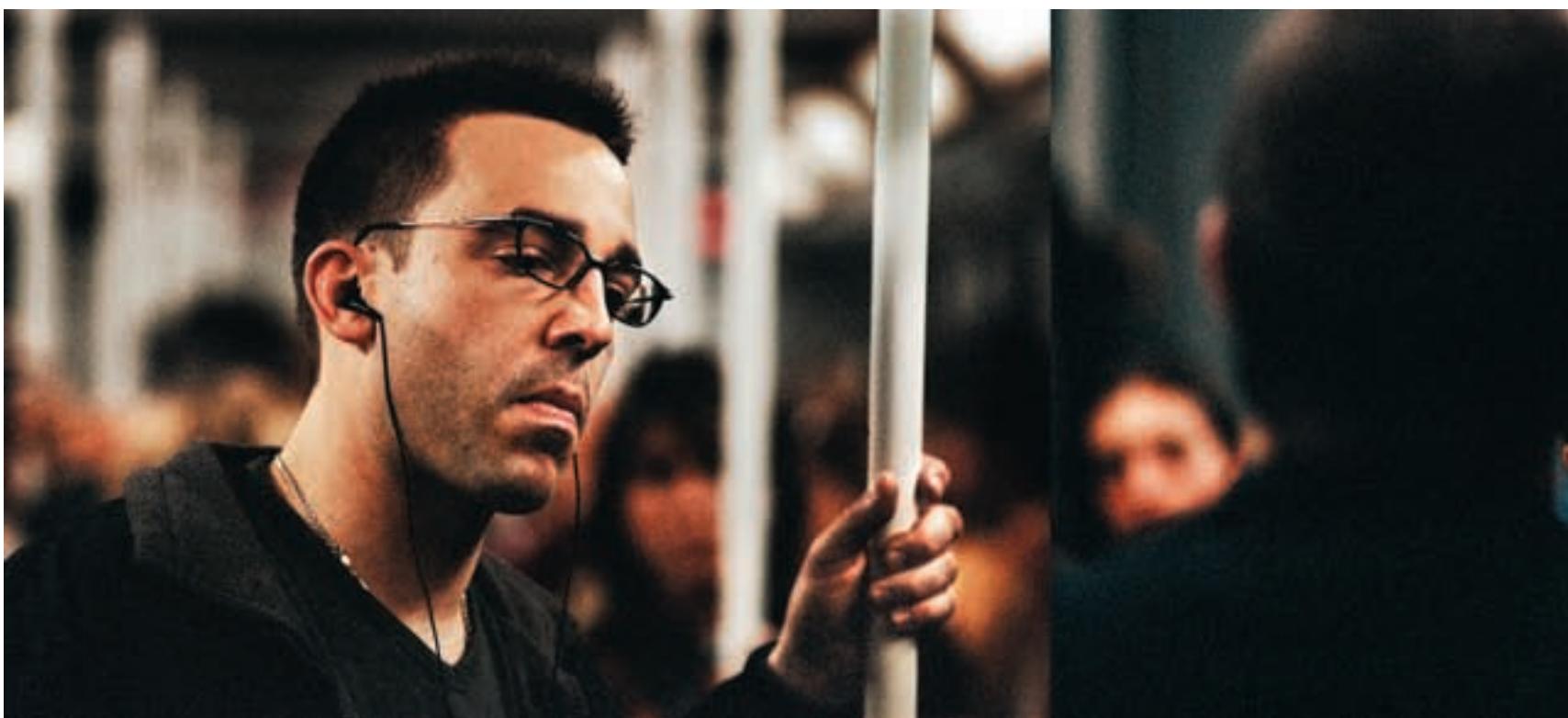
Pasi Mäenpää

Urban Encounters, Performance and Innovation

The contemporary city is characterised by three things, all of which arise in that peculiar social situation where unknown people meet in the public space. Urban encounters always involve the special interior world that arises in the urban environment – the city both oppresses and liberates. Performance and performativity, on the other hand, are qualities of the ubiquitous *theatrum mundi*, theatre of the world; qualities we are either drawn to or repelled by. The most fashionable things associated with urban encounters are creativity and innovation. They embody a special promise that the city is able to produce something that does not yet exist – but should. This is the reason why the city is interesting to art and the economy alike.

The Threat and
Promise of the Crowd

As the modern city approached the 20th century, one aspect of it that really caught the imagination was the crowd. The city brought together strangers and made them live both in proximity and

far from each other. The crowd, either an ideological gathering or just a multitude ambling aimlessly along the streets, seemed like a super-individualistic force, an army merely awaiting for a leader and a driving idea.

This wonderment also developed into real research. José Ortega y Gasset saw the man of the masses as a personality type reaching all social classes, becoming a majority wielding political power and prone to violence. He described the "revolt of the masses", "the visible manifestation" of "this terribly powerful phenomenon", as "crammed together, 'stock full'".

"Cities are bursting with people. Houses are filled with tenants. Hotels are filled with guests. Trains are filled with passengers, cafes with customers, streets with pedestrians. (...) There used to be no difficulty in doing what has now become a constant problem: finding room for oneself." (Ortega y Gasset).

What was frightening about the crowd was not only the spatial congestion, but what happened to the individual in the press of the masses. The can-

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Translated by Tomi Snellman.

vas by Edvard Munch expressing this fear was not *The Scream*, but *Anxiety*. With the same sky as in *The Scream*, it shows people with expressionless green faces walking toward the viewer like zombies.

Munch's painting reveals what happens to people in the modern metropolis: they become expressionless and anonymous. However, the things that happen inside, the reactions of the individual to this extraordinary mode of social interaction, are only one side of the coin. The other side of the mental street in the modern city is sunnier: it offers the city-dweller the subjective freedom to become his or her ideal self, again and again.

In the 20th century, the crowd developed into a fearsome mass whose tracks, nevertheless, lead outside the city, most glaringly perhaps to the horrors of the concentration camp. Auschwitz is not a city, but a campus. At the same time, elsewhere in Germany, the crowd – the modern mass of humanity – led the Frankfurt School to formulate its criticism of the mass society. The critique broke away from the masses as a spatial phenomenon, however, and discovered the 'massness' of the material, industrial world.

Towards the end of the century, the crowd began to acquire more individualistic traits. Baudelaire's *flâneur* returned in the guise of the urban con-

sumer. If, in the first half of the 20th century, Helsinki lived in thrall of the Berlin–America axis (the Stockmann and Liittopankki buildings), the latter half was dominated by America–Paris with their motorised suburbia, and their romanticised urbanities.

Cultural criticism aside, the consumer society and its attendant urban individuality gradually developed their present-day efflorescence. The consumer city is a place of continuously evolving identities, and in this sense it is actually a space of production. The greatest change in the functional structure of Helsinki was the Itäkeskus shopping mall, where the indoor streets are named *Boulevard*, *Passage* and *Piazza*. The *Boulevard* was designed by Juhani Pallasmaa, perhaps the best known of the present generation of philosophising and artistic architects in Finland.

"All the World's a Stage"

Shakespeare's famous adage resonates in city streets and the urban society; it would make no sense at all in a rural environment. It is no accident that *theatrum mundi*, the idea that social life is fundamentally a kind of theatrical phenomenon, is often located in the public urban space. For some, the theatre of life in the city offers the role of the spectator; for others it may even offer an opportunity to transcend the roles of everyday life.

The mask of urban anonymity people adopt in the streets affords shelter not only for observation, but for creating personal worlds of imagination. Consider the Finland of the 1980s, when the tradition of doe and stag parties was revived, in which the bride or bridegroom is dressed up in

a role costume and paraded publicly around town. Performance and city art both arrived in Finland in the same decade, along with a general enthusiasm for urban culture. In its simplest form, performativity is the same as street sociability: hanging out, watching others, and being watched in return, in street cafés and restaurants' outdoor "terraces", as we say in Finnish.

In street sociability, the urban melting pot presents us with a pageant of protocultures made up of unknown people and their styles. Through the acquisition of lifestyles, consumption reproduces this pageant and communicates it culturally, as Clifford Geertz has described. Consumption is me becoming myself through a process of desire, exploration, and testing out new representations of the self. It is also our way of collectively telling ourselves who we are culturally and what our attitude towards others is in this limitless and ahistorical world.

The modern metropolis is ultimately a space for play, where people distance themselves from their identity and fantasise that they are someone else. Shakespeare's adage needs to be rephrased as "all the world's a playground". The city – above all its commercial spaces and premises that are the largest growth area of urban space – is a place for relaxation for its own sake, hanging out, and consumption. It is a place for cutting oneself loose from everyday worries and cares and, above all, for living a double life between the actual and the potential self.

The playful consumer-urbanite, *homo ludens urbanus*, is in a process of continuously reworking the self, as Foucault has observed. The intense

self-relation of the modern city-dweller does not stem from control, however, but from the inherent social order of the public space. It is not about asceticism, but about a mimetic relation to the self. Its traces go back to Simmel's conception of modernity, Bakhtin's polyphonic actor, and Benjamin's way of elevating an archaic cultural feature, mimesis, into a ubiquitous property of modern culture.

New urban technology also contains an individualistic, consumerist, self-referential dimension. Cities are made up of an ever-growing and increasingly impenetrable technological infrastructure, from the sewerage system to wireless networks. For the inhabitants, however, connecting to these systems implies choice as well as control over their surroundings, their use of time, and their relations with other people. For instance, the urban use of the mobile phone is largely about life management that extends beyond space (the boundaries of the body) and time.

Urban performativity, *theatrum mundi*, increasingly turns inside toward private relations instead of public life. This means that the city as a shared collective environment is transformed into several nested cities, miniature worlds within a world. The spirit of the place, *genius loci*, reveals itself only momentarily and only for some of the city's inhabitants. It excludes some, while offering others an urban cocoon instead of public space.

Urban Youth as Innovators

In his reinterpretation of the history of civilisation, Ed Soja, the Los Angeles-based researcher of urban life, gives ur-

ban culture a greater role than hitherto has been done. Soja uses the term *synekism* to describe the spatial proximity of people in a city, positing it as a principle that spawns cultural progress and innovation. The term comes from the Greek *synoikismos*, which referred to living under one roof or in one household (*oikos*), but also more generally the conglomeration of dwellings into a larger whole.

According to Soja, the power of synekism can be seen in that, contrary to earlier views, agriculture did not develop gradually among nomads who had settled down, but around the edges of cities. This means that agricultural culture, generally regarded as the precursor of industrial and urban culture, is the result of urban development instead of the other way round. It is this very meta-idea – urbanity as a reactor of ideas – that is extremely attractive to the contemporary city, like the Holy Grail.

It is here that youth enters the picture. Ever since the early 1970s, anthropology, history and youth studies have all been suggesting that the breakthrough in youth culture has led to a reversal of roles between youth and adults. Adults have begun to imitate their children, not the other way round. The historian Eric Hobsbawm pinpoints the timing of the shift somewhere in the 1960s youth generation. However, at least some of the underlying phenomena Hobsbawm enumerates took place in Finland later, in the 1980s and 1990s: technological devices (computers), ubiquitous internationality, centrality of work and career, urban culture, and consumer culture. As a matter of fact, Hobsbawm does not speak of a sudden break, but
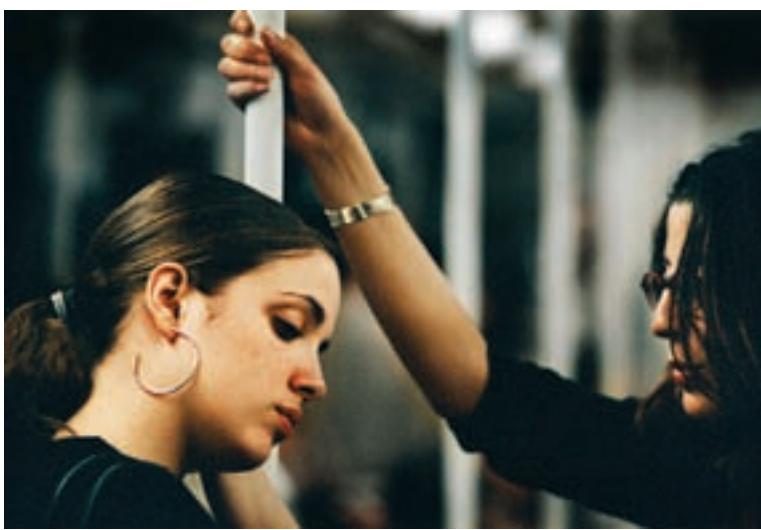
of youth culture as "the substratum of cultural revolution".

And indeed, youth should not be considered merely as an object manipulated and moulded for marketing purposes. They should also be seen as a hegemonic cultural actor in the market. Moreover, it seems that, with the growing consumption of information technology, the younger generations are actually becoming cultural producers; and even innovation research has shifted its focus from the producers of technology to its users. The uses of technology do not seem to be standardisable any more. Innovative users come up with novel uses that designers are unable to anticipate.

This perspective is the result of the development of mobile phones, and SMS messaging in particular, into a mass phenomenon in the 1990s, starting in Finland. Youth has been adopted as a target group for testing technological innovations. Beyond SMS mes-

saging, there are picture phones, SMS teletext chat, SMS chat, mobile phone games, and smart clothes that were first designed for the snowboarding scene. All these are akin to play, sociability turned into a technically functional form.

The consumption of information technology also holds the promise of access to production, and thus to new social ascent. The IT culture known as hackerism embodies the idea of a new kind of work ethic, playful yet successful action in information networks. The same is implied by the double meaning of the word 'nerd': a nerd can be a shy boy with a fascination for computers, but also a new kind of hero for the information society. The shift in the meaning of the word in the latter direction shows that, unlike the classical theory of consumer culture, technological culture does not trickle up, but springs from youth culture to work and production.

Innovation belongs to a vocabulary that is very much associated with the information society in Finland. In the Finnish language, the terminology is more solemn, however, lending solemnity also to the related discourse. This is in part due to the fact that the Finnish term for information society, *tietoyhteiskunta*, translates literally as 'knowledge society'. As the Finnish sociologist Erik Allardt has pointed out, the English word 'information' is a technical term that does not imply the requirement of truth, unlike the Finnish word *tieto*, which is much broader in scope. The philosopher Jaakko Hintikka, on the other hand, has remarked that the English word 'innovation' denotes the novel application of an idea, not a creative invention, which is the meaning the word often has in Finnish. Is urban innovativity something that has more to do with speech and discussion than with concrete reality?

Let us return to the three urban themes in the title: urban encounters, performativity, and innovation. The first two are characterised by a tendency to become either good or evil, as in a reversible figure. Anonymity and indifference both trigger a bottomless Angst and open the door to Paradise. The mimetic performer stands the risk of drowning in his role, or being forced to search for a new identity forever. As an everyday urban experience, it is an eternal promise that is both fulfilled and left unsatisfied every day. On the other hand, a creative city holds the promise of putting the heterogeneity and tolerance of the city to use. The city does not only exist to show itself; it is put to work, made use of. The risk, however, is that a forceful drive for creativity and innovation tends to clip the wings of urban play by turning it into a utilitarian activity, economic or artistic. +

An Urgent Inquiry

Helsinki International Artist Programme – HIAP (founded in 1999) is an international residency programme located at the old Nokia's Cable Factory in Helsinki's suburban area Ruoholahti. The modest funding for the activities is provided by the City of Helsinki and the Finnish Ministry of Culture. The artists stay in Helsinki from 2 to 4 months, by invitation, through partnerships and artist-exchanges. Disciplines are visual/performing arts, dance and curatorial practices. One of the main purposes is to encourage interaction with Finnish contemporary artists and the Helsinki art-scene.

The three studios, provided by the Helsinki City Cultural Office, are on the fifth floor of the Cable Factory. Each has an area of 50 sq m, and they are connected by a shared kitchen and sanitary facilities. The studios are equipped for basic computer-based working and have a cable connection to the Internet.

In spite of extremely modest practical resources – only three small studios for living and working and one part-time worker – the residency programme has during five years been able to give quite an amazing glimpse of possibilities to improve cultural exchange and activate the artistic scene in Helsinki. Now, however, HIAP is suddenly confronted with an urgent problem. Due to regulations, living in the studios will no longer be allowed in the near future.

This raises a bunch of questions about the role of art and artists within the processes of city planning.

Inspired by the importance and experiences of some outstanding international residency programmes, not least that of IASPIS in Stockholm, *Framework* sent an e-mail inquiry in this matter to Kai Wartianen, one of the most prominent and innovative Finnish architects who designed in the neighborhood of the Cable Factory a five building office complex of High Tech Center (HTC Helsinki, 2001) and is currently Professor of Town Planning at the School of Architecture in the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. We wanted him to consider possible solutions to the problem: How to arrange good living conditions for artists who are interested in staying a couple of months in Helsinki?

And here we have Wartiainen's thought provoking reply:

Kai Wartiainen

"There is a powerful drive right now to build Ruoholahti to look like a city. This rigid idea includes many visual elements, such as stone plinths. But the kind of urban life and social structures that produced living plinths in the past no longer exist. And yet, yards upon yards of stone plinth are produced until it hurts.

In earlier times, plinths made of natural stone not only carried the weight of the whole building, they also housed the numerous grocery stores and other shops that were needed, a few on every block, because there were no supermarkets then. Now houses have a veneer of stone around ground-floor shelters for bicycles and prams. Which is tantamount to underlining and making visible the death of traditional urban elements.

I think the idea is banal to have artists live in ground-floor studios to make the city more alive (a solution that would be faultlessly correct and desirable, according to current town planning dogma).

It would be interesting to find other traditional, dead objects to turn into habitable spaces. I am thinking of inhabited bus shelters, lived-in awnings by the canal for waiting boat taxis, light pylons with dwellers, etc. Objects designed to make the urban environment more pleasant and give habitation a new dimension. They could house mini galleries or roadside altars, where the dwellers could present their work.

It would be interesting to create temporary dwellings for artists, but more permanent living structures for the city. Which is precisely what the studios in the Cable Factory have offered – new life in a dead factory. But it is precisely that which is forbidden in a dead city looking like a city.

Creating these new, strange living objects would be quite enough for a whole life's work of an architect!" +

This page: A five-building office complex of the High Tech Center, Helsinki, 2001, for IT and new media companies by Arkkitehtitoiminta Oy Kai Wartiainen in collaboration with Evata Finland Oy. The buildings are named after the vessels of famous explorers – Columbus' Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria, Nordenskjöld's Vega and Heyerdal's Kon-Tiki. The total area of the buildings is about 36,000 sq m, including around 30 companies and 1,500 jobs. Photo by Jussi Tiainen.

Next page: Peter J. Evans, *Light Suit and Spirit Level*. Performance 8.12.2002, Helsinki, Sisä Hattu (Inner Hat Island). Photo by Sakari Viika.
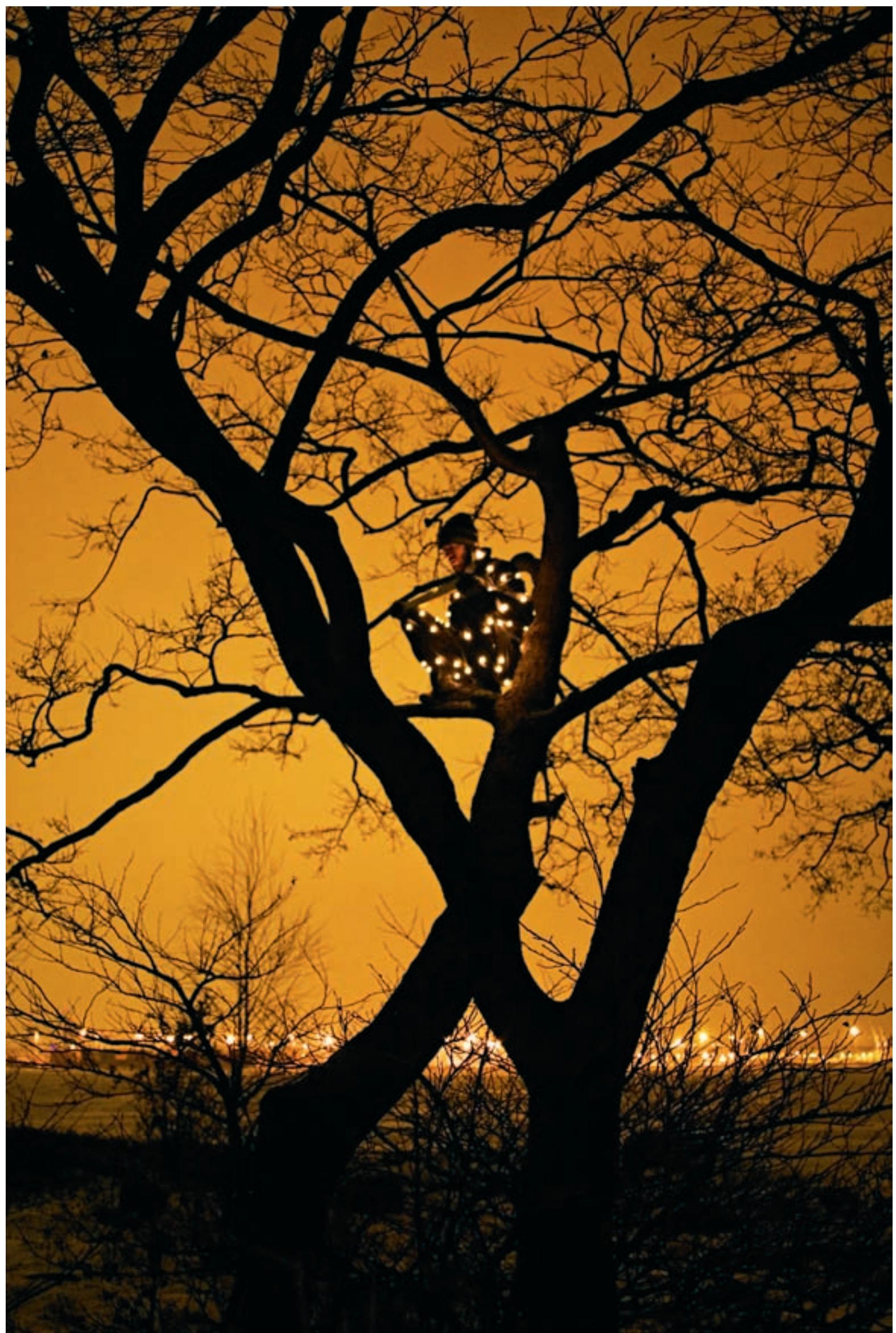
Mary Jane Jacob is an independent curator, currently the curator for the Spoleto Festival USA's ongoing "Evoking History" program and Professor and Chair of Sculpture at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Paula Toppila is Curator of Frame - The Finnish Fund for Art Exchange. *Language editing Tomi Snellman.*

(1) From Michael Brenson, *Acts of Engagement: Writings on Art, Criticism and Institutions, 1993-2002* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004), 18.

Mary Jane Jacob

A Moment of Sharing – An Interview on Making and Mediating Public Art by Paula Toppila

This e-mail interview with Professor Mary Jane Jacob, an independent curator, discusses some aspects of long-term public art projects that Ms. Jacob has curated in United States since the mid-1990s. Issues discussed include independent curating, audiences of public art, success and failure, reception and the (im)possibility of mediating these projects for (the other) audiences.

Paula Toppila (PT): You are well known and respected as the curator of several groundbreaking public art projects in the United States, such as *Culture in Action* (Chicago, 1991–4) and *Conversations in a Castle: Changing Audiences and Contemporary Art* (Atlanta, 1995–6). Would you like to tell how you first decided to leave the art institution of the museum, become an independent curator, and start working on projects that take place outside the traditional spaces of art?

Mary Jane Jacob (MJJ): …the long delay in answering your question because I have been occupied for some weeks preparing for the beginning of classes here at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and in this process of attending to logistics and snatching time for concepts, I've been thinking that maybe the institution of an art school (that I had thought was different than a museum) was perhaps not so unlike others, not a creative space. Just having received a close colleague's new book, I read his introduction that ends with this self-description: "These are the writings of someone who knows full well the importance of institutions but who struggles constantly with the suspicion, not yet a belief, that institutionalization is death".(1) And I wonder – me, too?

So your question is timely. It was fifteen years ago this month that I made the self-proclamation of being an independent curator. Perhaps paradoxically, each exhibition project that I've crafted has been carried through a host institution. But my work has been on the margins of each and this status is critical, I can say, even powerful and provocative. Thus, as an independent curator I have been both *in* the institution [we need to adhere to something

to have our actions connect to those of others] and *out* [commissioned to do an experimental or alternative project for an organization]. At its best, it also became a way for the institution and the people in it to see themselves and to reflect on their own work. And what is equally significant about this position is that here the institution can imagine itself differently – here in the moment of the making – as we can focus collectively on something that aims to embody the very reason for the institution's existence and give ourselves over to that process. These special projects, accomplished under the auspices of certain institutions, never turned out to be what the organization originally proposed when inviting me. They always evolved, purposefully, as we questioned why we were doing this project, revisiting this question consciously and fully engaged in the process – and it was always mandatory to stay open to where this process could lead. Some observers would call this a risk, but it never was. I think the idea of risky is a residue of the Modernist desire to keep alive the avant-garde's dream of innovation as challenging and an affront to the public. Rather we were involved in something quite timeless – a need for dialogue – striving to maintain our trust (not without relapses and some fears) that the right form would emerge and that by deeply investing together in the process, as we moved from our communal unknow-ingness into knowing, the product would emerge (the art works and exhibition) and the long passage of this process would be worth it.

Now I *find myself* (this phrase appropriately evokes my present sense of detachment) working as an administrator in an art school, while also a professor and still an independent curator. I thought it would be better to

work in an institution populated by artists than curators. But being *inside* the institution doesn't always allow us to be our best selves. So I am seeking to find ways to talk to my colleagues, perhaps off-campus and, preferably, in their studios, to connect to a creative side in which we can together imagine things differently. And I hear from another long-time colleague, with whom I share a discourse on Public Art, who recently writes: "My concern is that the art part for the individual artist may be lost when the organizational affiliation is stressed more than the investigation into developing new paradigms. It needs to be more…open for artists to push into new areas and develop new approaches to creating public art. Perhaps another way to say it is that by the time the institution has developed a program, the information has been around and become rather mundane."

So, I think we arrive at your next question.

PT: One aspect that appeals to me in new public art is that it makes the work visible to larger audiences if we compare it to art works normally shown in art museums. As this process can happen in collaboration with local people or even with a targeted collaborator-audience, it is not only made visible, but the participants can actually affect the process, that is, the work of art. What have been your experiences and challenges as a curator (for example with *Culture in Action* in Chicago) in working this way and mediating these works to art professionals and other audiences?

MJJ: Actually, coming in touch with the public has been the most exciting, important, at times demanding part of this work. At first, I thought we need-

ed to locate the issues of the community in and around which a work was to be created (their needs, their stories that needed to be told, for instance) and then we could translate them into art so that others might know, too. In this, I am speaking for myself and the artists with whom I work intimately to bring about their projects. So, we also thought we might solicit their ideas (say, about what they would like to see happen in their town). But the notion of *permission* arose and we needed to ask the audience, essentially: Can we work with you? Can we work in your spaces? In these communications, the underlying thread in the process needed to be respect.

The most critical thing is to make time in the process to share: to reflect with others on the simple evidences and complex patterns of our everyday lives, to share by letting the loose ends of a process-yet-unformed be exposed. And in this way, people can ingest in bite-size pieces aspects of the eventual, often multi-layered work, spend more time with it, and in the end remember the taste of the creative process and that is exhilarating! Then, their experiences of participating in the process of a work's actual becoming can also affect the artists and the shape of the eventual works. But for that to happen, it is up to artists to listen carefully to the public who are the motivating source of the work, and this brings us back to the words respect and trust in the practice of sharing: artists respecting the voices of others and, absorbing them over time, translating them through their own artistic processes; members of the public becoming part of the process and trusting a process whose outcomes cannot be fully detailed in advance.

So, it is challenging. The artist and curator and the citizen have to be vulnerable: open to the unexpected, to others' ideas and responses, and to making the imperfect stages of their own work known to others. At the same time, it is invigorating because it reaffirms that others outside the artworld, the so-called public, are truly interested in art.We just have to leave the door open. In the case of *Culture in Action*, there were many vocal critics who were outraged and found reprehensible the claim that community members could have a role in a work of art because they existed outside the professional boundaries of art and, thus, were deemed unqualified. I love the reactions and exchanges with the public…that is where the real dialogue about art happens!

Now this kind of interaction doesn't happen with each member of the public; not everyone steps up front-and-center or stakes a claim in the process; it is usually just a very small number of people that connect

to the project at first, but I think even these few numbers have a ripple effect and, over time, others find a relationship to the work, too. I think there might be a lesson here that we can take back into the experience of art in and out of the museum. This may sound abstract or ill-defined, but the problem in communicating this invested process to those outside it is that this process is very personal and real understanding develops over time, by living the experience in real time and in the palpable ways in which we live the process itself. The art experience in the museum, too, is personal and we can't re-consume or record the audience's experience; we have to trust it will happen…and the meaning a work can have for us can occur long after our visit to the museum.

PT: A couple of questions arise immediately from this honest and insightful answer: I believe you had perhaps some personal discussions, even deep debates around the discourse on public art during and after *Culture in Action*. Now, leaving aside what was said in the media and considering what actually happened, how people knew and felt the artists' projects, I think you were mapping out new territory regarding how contemporary art in a public space is perceived and received. What interests me is how was the reception of the project documented, beyond media coverage, for local participants as related to their experience? Or perhaps there is living evidence of the project still in Chicago?

MJJ: The media was pretty damning: first and foremost around whether it was "art." This kind of public art became circumspect because of its association with the members of the public who were the subject, whose issues and concerns were foregrounded, and who were key constituents or collaborators. Daily newspapers interviewed "the man-on-the-street," everyman, anyone; so they spoke to participants and were comfortable to tell their stories and make some connection to art; they were open to art being something different and excited it could be so directly a part of the lives of citizens in the city. These journalists had fewer preconceptions about what was art.

But art critics really only talk to art people. So, critics not only kept to themselves and judged works according to their own art histories, they also projected onto the public their sense of who the public is and how the un-art-educated public would react…without ever spending time with people they did not know, hence the public. (Art critics look at objects and make assessments; they do not talk to viewers. They maintained this convention of not talking to the public,

even though the mode of art had radically changed and the public was an essential part of the making of each work.) The art press also has preconceptions about the experience of art. I discovered that the art world has quite a narrow idea of who is the audience for contemporary art. [This idea actually became the pivotal question that artists and I took up in my next public art program: *Conversations at The Castle: Changing Audiences for Contemporary Art* in Atlanta.] I was bothered by the dismissive attitude of our art world in thinking that the public doesn't fit in. Unfortunately, the art press has the voice in the art field; their assessments linger and serve to define the ways things are understood in contemporary art history. I was motivated to break this down because I knew, firsthand, that for many people (whose names are not remembered in art annals), their involvement in making or viewing these art projects was life-changing… and there are always even more who we do not know about. In fact, people (in and out of the art world) still write me about their experience today, ten years later. Some projects live on, such as Inigo Manglano-Ovalle's *Televecindario* undertaken with local teenagers around issues of their representation in the media and culture; it was transformed into an organization called Street-Level Youth Media that today serves 1,100 students from disadvantaged backgrounds each year. Maybe it is only with time that we really know about experience – ours and that of others.

Now the arena of public art has broadened and many embrace working in direct contact with those who are not artists. But at the time, the works we created for *Culture in Action* developed out of a deep and urgent searching, looking at questions that lay at the intersection of art audiences and the art work. We weren't looking for people to tell us what their problem in life was so we could make an art work about it or try to remedy it with art. Our questions were about the value of art and the art experience. And while some works connected to social questions and aspects of the human predicament, taking on the reality of the public and fusing with life's processes, this was a path or way of making art that emerged as we went deeper into these questions. Now that this path has been articulated, some artists adopt it as a style, proceeding deductively rather than inductively. In order for art to have vitality and quality, relevance and endurance, art always has to take up questions in thoughtful ways – and in ways that are new to us even if the questions are eternal.

PT: It is enlightening to read what

you say about the practical side of the process, the research on the issues between the audience and art work, how the method of working emerged and that it was not a direct causality-seeking process of problem and solution. Socially engaged or community artists are often criticized for trying to become social workers, even if the artists themselves are very much against this idea and have other interests and starting points. Perhaps this has to do with the problem of mediating the process to the other audiences you talked about earlier?

Another question is that in the context of socially engaged public art, how would you define success? Or failure? Earlier you said that you do not actually find working in the field of public art riskier, as one would suppose, but that you have found a way of working that is more of an elaborated process, teamwork, where one has to concentrate on maintaining openness, to stay attentive, constantly question oneself. I'm interested in this dichotomy of failure and success, because success is by nature visible; failure is often hidden, covered, not talked about, but still there. I'm interested in your relationship to and thoughts on this.

MJ: Well, sure, we hide the parts that didn't go so smoothly and the narratives we construct – our retelling of the story – takes on its own life that highlights what we thought worked, the parts that we like to remember most. The acknowledgment of successes and failures are subject to our own perspectives and recollections. So that is one way in which we could talk about success and failure.

Or we could be scientific and look at the effects on individuals: collaborators and public supporters, visitors and passersby, artists and many others, even funding agencies. But time and resources in the arts rarely allow for such an analysis, and that would be laborious to be sure. So we depend on anecdotal, incidental recountings for bits of information. Over time we learn of an eventual success because works have a real transformative role…or is it that after time has passed, it is the positive aspects that find their way back to us? But I cannot answer your question of success and failure on this level of truth.

Yet there is another way in which we can consider success and failure which has to do with (a) the artist's or the art work's intent; and (b) how wide is our frame of consideration.

In the first way, to know how well something is accomplished, we have to know what is its aim. By this I don't mean a work's surface description but its deeper reason for being (such as, to contribute to the health of a community or to social good or to the beauty

Denise Ziegler, *Spider Plant Race*, event on September 18th 2004, Maljalahdenkatu 20, Kuopio, Finland. Photos by Pekka Mäkinen.

of a place; to touch people, to change them, to have a positive effect on the way they feel) rather than immediate goals (like, to have a certain size audience, to teach children to read, or to convince people that contemporary art is great). The aims of a work of art can be accomplished in many different ways and work that looks quite unusual and un-artful (as some of the *Culture in Action* projects did at the time) can share the same aims as art of the past. Moreover, the effects of a work that is experienced by a small group of people can spread to others, a whole community might have changed, thus achieving the intent of the work and making it a success. But we do not often know this chain of effects and how the experience of art enters and is transformed in the lives of its primary and subsequent publics. So, we have to trust that art and the questions of art matter… knowing from our own experiences that it can…and trust that a work of art can be a success even if we cannot verify it.

In the second way, a project needs to be assessed within a very wide frame of reference. A work of art that is not embraced by the art world, may be a beacon for townspeople or meaningful for professionals in another field. A work may be temporary in its physical manifestation, but it may live on as an image or idea or dream; it may have been picked up by others and sparked an idea in far-off places, leading them to follow their own imaginations of what art can be and how it can relate to their lives. I take our conversation – across the email and across continents – to be a point of success for the projects I helped engender but you take the time to ask about them… so I thank you. I would add one more thing: this is only possible because our frame is wide in regard to what art can be, what an exhibition can be, what artists can do, who is the public for contemporary art, and what art can mean in the everyday.

PT: Can meaningful, thoughtful public art be made by using other methods than the elaborated way that you have developed and that has now, as you say, become a trend in public art projects in the United States, and is it possible to gain new audiences without directly collaborating with them in the long-term? We have seen some examples of very differently realized

public art projects in Kuopio, Finland, where a young festival called ANTI takes place, dedicated to producing works in the public space. Perhaps you would like to reflect on those projects.

MJJ: I hope meaningful public art can be made in more than one way! I must say, as a seminar participant in ANTI, I was stunned to arrive in Kuopio at the same moment as some of the artists did for the first time! It could have been a very cavalier scenario, but over the four days of the festival I found, not only could one have a full and absorbing – total – experience (because, in fact, it was possible to be a part of the whole festival), but also a few of the works were deeply touching. Those that touched me the most had a commonality: the artists worked from their own experience in another place or culture, yet their art translated with ease to another context, because they each were insightful about human emotions, allowing us to experience them in our own time and place. And, maybe, too, it was because these works were disarming in their engagement, drawing us in with their humor and even absurdity. So Koji Takamiya's *Otama Garden* was delightful at the same time it was forlorn as an evocation of childhood fantasy. Jennifer Nelson and Glen Redpath's marathon through Prisma hypermarket was fabulous: installations of food and other stuff mounting in the aisles, as did viewers who abandoned for a time their shopping. And who would have thought crowds of people would gather in the rain and bond to collectively cheer on spider plants as they "raced" down a small inclined street staged by Denise Ziegler?

In the early 1990s projects that emerged from short-term artists' visits were damned by U.S. critics as "parachuting," gestures of exploitative art occupation. But I think that assessment was too blunt, too mathematical an equation (days in residence equal importance of project). ANTI is truly a gift to the city and I hope in years to come it can continue to intertwine audiences from different walks of life into the experience. It can also benefit from nurturing some projects that take root in the place over an extended time period – just as I can now imagine adopting a strategy of immediate engagement of site. There is more than one way. +

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Jonathan Lahey Dronsfield

Art... ethical? As if!

As if art were ethical not because it aids conduct or favours this or that action or decision, or not importantly that, but because it seeks to raise the question of what ethics is, and in a way which is not simply or primarily ontological. Which would mean not just asking 'ethical questions' or questions about ethics, or performing problems of ethics in the works art presents or how it presents them; it would mean setting up a space in which questions of this sort can be heard differently than in ways defined or decided by ethics or discourses on ethics.(1) Inescapably, then, art will always be open, in principle, to the charge of irresponsibility and to the possibility of errancy, and it will always run the risk of a certain criminality, and no matter how representational it is it will always retain an intimate link to nihilism and to negation. To make art is not to reproduce a moral space, it is to transform it such that the viewer or participant is invited to become or to refuse to become the apt agent of art's discovered or created or invented responses 'as if' they were real, a process which involves the viewer in working out whether indeed the invitation and the response is or can be real.

To say that art is 'as if' real in this way might make it seem that art is free in exchange for its share of reality, might make it seem that artists and curators appeal to ethics precisely because art is not real but virtual, 'as if', which would be grounds for not taking art and exhibitions seriously in a moral sense: 'as if!' as we say in English, 'contemporary art ethical? as if!' But to suggest that art sets up spaces of questioning 'as if' they were real is not to take what is given with the event of art as unreal, it is to suggest that what art presents is a space to work out what is real and what is not. It is not, as Klaas Hoek interprets Hans Vaihinger, that we must move to substitute the inventiveness of the 'as if' for the obedience of the 'because', the "fictitious life that removes itself from reality and [the search] for reasons" for the "frightened hypothetical life which keeps on looking for reality and reason", for this merely rein-

states the opposition which arts seeks to question.(2) Concepts and values do not become fictitious in proposing them as if God wills them rather than because God wills them, it is not that we are enabled to 'act ethically' as if God wills it rather than because God wills it, as if inventiveness were 'stronger' than obedience, and not just because Hoek seems to be calling for an obedience here (both to inventiveness and to the distinction between inventiveness and obedience), but because the reality of the act and the reason for it are to be decided in our judgement about the work and our relation to it, which itself is a play between obedience and inventiveness.

The 'as if'-ness of contemporary art displaces experience from a given place in the order of our confrontation with artworks. When philosophers propose that we respond to art in a disinterested aesthetic sense rather than an invested existential sense they presuppose two things: one that the place of the response is the gallery, and two that the gallery is not a real space. But the effect of art is not to be presumed to be felt in the gallery. It is to move away from defining the experience of an artwork in material medium-specific and site-specific terms. Ethics comes into art because the art object is not simply a substance but a function and a process. The modernist orthodoxy of insisting on a self-reflective questioning in terms of art's materiality misses the point: self-ques-

tioning is not just a reflection on art's material properties it is a function of what art is. Thus the dichotomy between a functional explanation providing an account of what art *does*, and an ontological explanation of what art *is*, is false. And it is the viewer's participation in art's self-questioning which makes of the site of an art work a process, or as Tere Vadén and Mika Hannula put it in their recent book *Rock the Boat: Localized Ethics, the Situated Self, & Particularism in Contemporary Art*, a site "constantly generated and shaped" during the process of participation, "a participation which is both physical and discursive", to the extent that even what we call 'local' is "never natural", but "always processual".(3)

Art proposes that the world is made real by our ability to bring to it our experience of the artwork. Were it not for art we would not have had some of the thoughts we do, we would not dare to think in ways that we do. To refer to an example discussed by Vadén and Hannula, perhaps Jonathan Meese is 'irresponsible' in his utterances in his 2000 show at Kunst-Werke, Berlin,(4) but not for the reasons Vadén and Hannula suggest when arguing that the 'context' of Meese's exhibition decides the 'substance' of it, no matter how loathsome that 'context' is. For the 'context' of an artwork is no more determinable than the 'substance' of it. The context does not come first and the artwork after,

not if our participation is processual (or 'locality' temporal) in the way Vadén and Hannula maintain. For Vadén and Hannula the fact that statistics reveal an 'increased' amount of racist activity in the year of Meese's show compared to the year before decides that Meese's utterances are 'meaningless' and 'hollow', or in other words that the context of the utterances decides the 'meaning' of them, but they do not say why. They rest content with the context 'speaking for itself'. The whole passage bears quoting:

"Is Meese only being provocative or is there any substance in this? Yes, there is certainly substance, but not what Meese intended - or at least let us hope not. Because, if he did intend the obvious substance that was left, it makes him not only a confused clown, but clearly a proud far-right-wing sympathizer. Why so? The substance of the hollow act and the idiotic slogans that he shouted does not come from Meese himself. It comes from the context of his action. In the year of the exhibition, in Germany, there were twice as many racially motivated attacks and violent incidents as the year before. On a street parallel to the site of Meese's installation, policemen were standing, as always, in front of the synagogue, with machine guns. The political climate is absolutely not Meese's fault, but it is, just as absolutely, his fault that he uses these racist and fascist slogans as if they have no meaning. This is irresponsible, stupid and dan-

(1) This is precisely the sense of the ethical missing from the précis accompanying and discussion following the one panel devoted to ethics in the recent conference *Institution². Art Institutions: The Ethics and Aesthetics of Working with Contemporary Art*: "..strategies of art mediation are emerging which make ethical imperatives the guiding principle of curatorial action. These are communicated between artists on the one hand, whom the ethically motivated museum can support in the role of adviser, aide or protective shield, and the public on the other, to whom the ethical museum proposes alternative orientations to those propagated by a moralistic society and the commercial worlds of the media and the entertainment industry.

Can the museum of contemporary art obey ethical imperatives? Can it enforce ethical imperatives in the art business? Do we need an ethical code for our everyday dealings with artists and other museums? Does the museum have an ethical duty that relates to society as a whole?" The panel, called "Ethical Imperatives", comprised Catherine David, Kestutis Kuizinas, Marysia Lewandowska, and Jérôme Sans. Kiasma Museum, Helsinki, 4 December 2003.
(2) Klaas Hoek, "Not because but as if nor or but and", in Anke Bangma (ed), *The Projection*, part five of *Now What? Dreaming a better world in six parts*, BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Netherlands: Utrecht, November 2003, p 5. Hoek is referring to Hans Vaihinger's *Die*

Philosophie des Als Ob: System der theoretischen, praktischen und religiösen Fiktionen der Menschheit auf Grund eines idealistischen Positivismus, Berlin: Reuther und Reichard, 1913.
(3) Tere Vadén & Mika Hannula, *Rock the Boat: Localized Ethics, the Situated Self, & Particularism in Contemporary Art*, Köln: salon verlag, 2003, pp 32 & 91.
(4) Jonathan Meese, *Sei Danjou, holzhand im saalysm, Légion Entrangère, 12. GesangSei Danjou*, Kunst-Werke, Berlin, October-November 2000.
(5) Vadén & Hannula, *op cit*, p 98.
(6) The suggestion that 'temporality' could be 'another name' for 'locality' is made on page 22. Nowhere in the book do the authors dis-

cuss the temporal implications of the processual nature of locality in terms which disturb the causal relation, the order of dependence or the temporal priority between context and meaning. Interestingly, towards the end of the book the authors characterise all artworks in a way which implies that it is the viewer's or participant's responsibility to take responsibility for the work, presumably as an entailment of his participation in it: "Basically, it is up to the viewer to give the work of art a chance to talk, to take the time and invest the energy to listen to what is said. It is a power relationship, in which the work of art is lying on the floor. It is helpless, without protection, no way to run for cover." *Ibid*, p 166. But what of the work that resists this, what do we do with it?

gerous. And it is very very bad contemporary art. Redescription needs content and context, too."(5)

Leaving aside the questionable entitlement to the claims 'certainly', 'obvious', 'clearly', and 'absolutely', which might after all be merely the expression of a good conscience, the important point to note is the idea that Meese is irresponsible because he uses the symbols he does *"as if* they have no meaning" [my emphasis]. What the authors are doing here is conflating the necessary irresponsibility in art making with an irresponsible use of the symbols as if their meaning were decided in advance, prior to the advent of their use in this particular artwork.(6)

It is not part of the ethical problem that the 'as if' real competes for our attention with the real, that 'as if' stories or showings can compete with real stories and events, for we wouldn't have a sense of what 'the real' is without art. Which partly explains why contemporary art, and Meese is a good example of this, more and more seeks to provide an entire space for the presentation of the event of art. Art has always tended towards providing its own context for interpretation, to allow the viewer to confront not just the work as object but the context in which it would make sense, a process of disclosure different from 'everyday' communication, which is why, for example, it calls for the assistance of technology.

As Heidegger notes, we do not see because we have eyes, we have eyes because we can see. It is naive to think that technology is virtual; the distinction between the real and the virtual has to be worked out *in* technology.

What 'reality' is precisely is what is in question for us, and we need a space in which freely to raise this question. We need art. We have art because the problem of the distinction between the real and the virtual is a real problem for us. The very distinction between the real and the virtual is to be decided, and the space of decision has to be real enough to invite philosophy to reflect on where the distinction falls within art, but not so real as to decide in advance what 'reality' is. Only then can art be seen to be posing questions about where the distinction between the real and the virtual lies, but in the real world as it were. So, artists and curators make their appeal to ethics out of a certain freedom, in that they see art as the embodiment of the right to say anything and everything as if it were real, whether it be even if, or especially if, under the heading of 'the ethical'.

On the other hand, it is precisely because art thinks itself free to say anything and everything that it is defenceless in the face of the real powers and interests which it might seek to resist or put into question. To say or show anything is impossible. Art never can or has been able to say just anything. Wanting more than anything

else freely to say and to show anything, art exhibits the fact there is no such freedom, because its freedom is not its own: if it is to *show* anything it must be public, it must be communicative, it must occupy a social space. Art seeks to be free to say anything and everything, put everything and anything about itself into question, perhaps in the most responsible and ethical way, but it cannot do so privately, and thereby does it puts itself at the disposal of what is public, including those powers and interests and imperatives, public and private and social, it would otherwise put into question. It is in showing itself freely that it puts itself up for appropriating (art itself has shown just how susceptible art is to appropriation), or for marketing, buying and selling (art itself has taught us how to do all of these things better), and for political application (revolutionaries, dictators and the politically correct have always found art to be ready to hand in the service of a desired political outcome). But art must nonetheless nurture the independence to question, even if at the same time it is thereby exposed to the interests and imperatives which threaten that independence, and this is perhaps why it reaches further and further in its grasp of itself in determining the entire space of its presentation and self-questioning. Perhaps this is why more and more artists are becoming curators, and why art more and more seeks a social space outside

the gallery. And perhaps this is why art more and more embraces theory, both in the 'how' of its self-questioning, and institutionally in its willingness to measure itself against cognitive norms, for instance in laying claim to being 'research' and in awarding artists PhD degrees.

Art's 'as if-ness' cannot be reduced to something pre-existent, as if we could say *what* art is 'as if'. Art asks itself what it is and in so doing proposes itself as an example which transforms the field not just of its objects and works but of what we call 'reality'. The history of art is at once both historically cumulative and self-transformative, and what we mean by 'history' is transformed by what we add to it. One way we understand ourselves through art is to see how we too are self-transforming, or second-natured, in the way in which we attend to the question of who and what we are, the who and what being as much answers as the questions responded to. Thus art's 'as if'-ness joins the aesthetic to the moral in being the revelation that we can see art works as we see persons, as singular events, as if our singularity were conferred by the way in which we come to ourselves as constructions whose nature is secondarily made up of our self-interpretations. As if. +

METAMORPHOSES
Review by
Kirsti Lempiäinen

Rosi Braidotti: *"Learn to listen to our schizophrenic culture"*

The main clue to Rosi Braidotti's philosophy is nomadic subjectivity, which also serves as an excellent reflection of her own life story. Braidotti was born in Italy, went to school in Australia, did her doctorate in France and is currently Professor of Women's Studies at Utrecht University, Holland. Braidotti covers many different fields in her research, too, but in none of her many roles does she cease being a feminist thinker.

Her lecture *The Return of the Masters' Narratives* carried its listeners with it into many topical academic discussions. According to Braidotti, master narratives are overtaking postmodernism; fragmentary authorship, the mobility of meanings and symbols. In their place are coming neo-realism, neo-capitalism and psychological, or perhaps something more like psychologising talk of evolution, which could also be placed under the rubric of neo-conservatism.

When the dilemma of differences versus sameness is reinforced – a debate that, in fact, banalises differences and creates in the celebration of differences a space for a sameness that is even stronger than before – new kinds of social-genetic evolution stories emerge. With the increase in ethnic differences, for example, Finnish nationality seems to be holding on tightly to its sameness, its undividedness. Braidotti sees exploitation of differences in many racist discourses and representations. Difference easily becomes devalued; too often, being different means being less than others. Differences are also exploited capitalistically. One example might be black rap culture and its spread into commercial images and cultural trends.

We are living in many times and spaces simultaneously, and so xenophobia and embracing of ethnicities also walk side by side. Just think, on the one hand, of the streams of refugees, increased violence and racism, and war victims, and, on the other hand, of the celebrated female body, which we see almost simultaneously in news reports about the victims of violence and in commercial images around the world. Our social space is filled with such media representations:

"This results in positioning embodied subjects, especially the female ones, at the intersection of some formidable locations of power: visibility and media representations produced a consumeristic approach to images in a dissonant or internally differentiated manner. Female embodied subjects in process today include interchangeably the highly groomed body of Princess Diana (like Marilyn Monroe before her) and the highly disposable bodies of women, men and children in war-torn lands."* (*Metamorphoses*, p. 17)

Braidotti has preserved the materialist foundation in her envisionings of a better world, which are marked by a critique of global capitalism. The capitalist market economy is at an increasing rate finding new places on the earth to put down roots and reinvents itself specifically by exploiting the dialectics of otherness and differences. Inclusion and exclusion are an exercise of power, and this places demands on both academic thinking and even on the making of cultural products. Braidotti, nevertheless, warns academics not to adhere too faithfully to the rules or to give in to efficiency-mindedness, and urges them now and then "to put reason into brackets". What we have been able to learn from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari is that the world has become *schizophrenic.*

Scientists and artists who interpret the world have to be more inventive and more courageous than ever. The status of the university system as a knowledge producer is now already very fragile, since a large amount of research is done outside the universities. One way of doing things differently is extending one's own habitual areas of operation. Braidotti urges researchers to establish dialogical communities, where art, philosophy, the social sciences, economics and technology can have a shared interest in the creation of new ways of thinking.

One of the barbs of Braidotti's criticism is directed against so-called 'neoliberal postfeminism'. It is characteristic of postfeminism to construct genealogies, historical continua, which seek out strong, successful women, and put them on a pedestal. Braidotti compares this mentality that puts the emphasis on status and success to money-mindedness, in other words saying that we create indicators that benefit us in one way or another. For postfeminism Madonna is a feminist icon, a heroic woman. The admiration of strong women or men may

reveal an admiration for strong leadership, which in turn can serve as fertile ground for fascistic imaginings. This kind of process is one form of colonisation, of conquering the past. As an alternative Braidotti proposes confronting the past so as to create new identities instead of giving prominence to a few heroic models for us to live by.

Time to Listen

In post-postmodernism we can notice the seeds of new growth. A primary starting point for the new approach to culture is that cultural studies is saturated with images. We live through images and have paid less attention to sound. Braidotti stresses the importance of the *acoustic*. Sound, the use of sound and listening have remained in the shadow of the image, seeing and the gaze. In philosophy we can read about this in the writings of *Adriana Cavarero* (*A piu voci*, 2003), but this theme is also prominent in Braidotti's *Metamorphoses.*

Acoustic environments are all around us. For example, insects are fantastic music makers, and their performances are technically skilful. Following Deleuze's ideas, by music Braidotti does not mean only a sound that arises out of the buzzings about on the planet, "the bodily noises that one makes in moving about the planet". Of greater interest in insects' music are speeds, variations, rhythm and intensity, which are, of course, also important in (human) compositions. Insects offer good examples of non-linguistic communication and of forms of thinking, whether the understanding being sought is linked with visual or acoustic technology.

The importance of hearing and sound is not limited to the so-called "sound realm". Braidotti, for example, urges us to listen to her own books and asks the reader:

"(D)o we live in the same world? Do you recognize yourselves in the cartography I am drawing here? Does this tune speak to your years? Does it resonate? If not, skip this passage, move on and waste no time." (p. 155)

If the writer is to be believed, the work should be read like a CD-ROM, moving backwards and forwards in the text at your own pace.

This elevation of sound alongside the image or beyond it is also done in the form of cultural and polit-

ical acts. Alternative acoustic environments were already created during the cold war (free radio stations), and the same conquest of sound is being made by today's techno-musicians. The important thing is making the inaudible audible, thus empowering the voiceless and creating a possibility for resistance. Rosi Braidotti also points out that, to an ever-increasing extent, we unwittingly inhabit post-human acoustic environments (which is easy to understand in my workroom as a writer, when I listen to the simultaneous hum of the air-conditioning and the buzz of the computer).

In the Deleuzean thinking that Braidotti represents, desire is the motor of political change. It means positivity as a counterweight to Freudian desire, which arises out of a lack. Braidotti challenges her reader to ponder the transformations and metamorphoses that we are seeing and hearing due to the torrent of information, telecommunications, post-industrialism and globalisation – and which we are ourselves generating. We, too, can get to be interpreters, depicters and hearers of changes by forgetting puritanical orthodoxy. But, nevertheless, there is no need to bypass the things that are important to us, locally right here and now – to want things is to create them.

The accusation has been levelled against Braidotti herself that, for her, gender difference appears to be an addiction, something that she will not give up, even though the importance of gender difference seems to be waning. She foregrounds *queer sex*, sexuality that is not rooted in the woman-man division and which is frequently also a political choice. Admittedly, by watching insects, for instance, we learn that queer sex is an intrinsic part of nature. Even though *queer* identity particularly attracts members of the younger generations, Braidotti sees gender differences as not necessarily vanishing in post-postmodernism. Instead of vanishing they have shifted or skewed on the spot, metamorphosed. +

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RADICAL EVIL
Review by
Mika Ojakangas

The article collection *Paha eurooppalaisessa perinteessä* (Evil in the European Tradition) edited by Ari Hirvonen and Toomas Kotkas is a major opener in the Finnish-language discussion of evil. There has admittedly been lively discussion of evil before – both in Finland and in the west in general. After all, evil is at the core of all Christian cultures, with Christianity being in many respects specifically a theology of evil. Nevertheless, it is possible to contend that the theme of evil was put on the back-burner during the last century. As I see it, this stemmed in the first place from the secularisation of western societies. The theme of evil has generally been thought of as a theological one, which is why efforts were made to avoid it. In place of theological language a social-science language emerged, in which the very existence of evil was questioned. Evil became either social maladjustment or individual abnormality.

The fact that evil is once again entering the discussion surely stems from the inability of the social sciences to confront evil *as evil*. Conversely, it stems from the resurgence of philosophy. In philosophy, which is undoubtedly closer to theology than the social sciences are, the issue of evil has never become problematic in the same way as it has in the social sciences. That is why philosophy can still pose questions about evil – and even about the *nature* of evil in the style of: "What is evil? Who is evil? Where does evil come from and what is evil like? Does evil actually exist?" These are the core questions in *Evil in the European Tradition*. In other words, the work's points of departure are philosophical ones. Evil is understood as evil, not as maladjustment or as a disease.

Broadly speaking, the volume addresses the core questions mentioned above from three angles. The first is provided by Immanuel Kant's *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, the first part of which ("Concerning the Indwelling of the Evil Principle with the Good, or, On the Radical Evil in Human Nature") is printed here in Finnish translation. The first four articles are in one way or another comments on this, insofar as the crucial question in them is about the relationship between evil and freedom. The next three articles mostly deal with the origin of evil, using concepts taken from Friedrich Nietzsche. The question is: How does human being start to conceive of the world in terms of good and evil at all? In the third part the emphasis is on the place of evil in psychoanalytic theory.

According to Hirvonen and Kotkas' foreword, this is still a relevant question. But its relevance does not stem from a desire to uphold a philosophical – and at the same time theological – tradition. It stems from the very relentlessness of evil: "The history of Europe bears witness in a way that is both tragic and appalling to recurrent manifestations of evil." In other words, even though evil is addressed here primarily as a philosophical question, this very question springs from empirical experience. The Age of Enlightenment outlined an image of the development of western reason as ultimately leading to the disappearance of all that is barbaric and evil. Things have, however, turned out otherwise. European thinking has been unable to prevent outbreaks of evil, nor the organisation of evil into totalitarian systems. One of the book's main themes is, in fact, National Socialism. How is it possible in enlightened Europe, where reason was supposed to triumph over evil, that reason in fact created a rational system of evil: the concentration camp?

Even though the title of the book is *Evil in the European Tradition*, it is not a comprehensive, history-of-ideas account of western evil. Its scope is, in fact, quite limited. Alongside Kant, it looks at the conceptions of evil held by Nietzsche, Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan and Slavoj Žižek. Added to that, the article collection includes Hirvonen's analysis of the relationship between the law and evil in modern jurisprudence and in National-Socialist Germany, along with Jarna Petman's piece on the return of evil in political rhetoric, which takes George W. Bush as an example. The book's title can, nevertheless, be considered justified, since Kant's writing on "radical evil" mentioned above has to such an extent influenced subsequent European thinking on evil.

What does radical evil mean according to Kant? It does not mean some special brand of evil. This is not a matter of evil that is somehow more radical than some other evil. It means simply that evil is in itself something radical, something that is ineradicably *rooted* in human nature. Goethe thought this idea was Kant's shameful concession to Christian orthodoxy. After all, the Christian faith's notion of evil is based on the idea of Original Sin. But this is not what is at issue. Kant did not want to give further weight to the idea of original sin, rather, he points out that people have, on the one hand, a natural *propensity* to evil, and on the other hand, that evil is always their *own free choice*. We could say that Kant turns upside down Baruch Spinoza's notion, according to which a free individual does not form any concepts of good and evil. According to Kant, only a human being who is by nature free from such concepts – in other words, is capable of evil. That is why Kant can write: "The history of freedom begins with evil."

How can it be possible that evil is at the same time both a propensity and a choice? Because, according to Kant, human beings choose even their own propensities. It is specifically from this that there derives the fact that any act can be evil at all. If we were to say that the foundation of evil is, for example, the human being's natural predispositions, evil would as though emerge beyond the human being's ability to choose. Being evil would become a phenomenon of nature, i.e. of the world of necessity, not of freedom. That is why, according to Kant, natural predispositions have no direct link with evil. Human beings are, nevertheless, more than their natural predispositions. They have free will – or at least we have to assume such a thing for the sake of morality, as Kant in fact does. Only the assumption of free will makes predispositions evil, since in the realm of freedom they inevitably become an object of free choice. Ultimately, this means that human beings are always responsible not just for their actions, but even for their propensities – whether those propensities be innate or acquired: "For whatever his previous deportment may have been, whatever natural causes may have been influencing him, and whether these causes were to be found within him or outside him, his action is yet free and determined by none of these causes." That is why no excuse can obviate the human being's responsibility.

Even though the book does not mention this, Kant's idea of the human being's radical responsibility is a part of the foundations of the whole of western legal thinking. Toomas Kotkas, who examines the history of western jurisprudence, for some reason does not take this into account in his article "Foucault, rikoslaki ja paha" (Foucault, criminal law and evil). According to him, right up to the 18th century, pre-modern jurisprudence was permeated by theological discourse, for which reason its idea of evil, too, was defined by the Christian religion's notion of sin. This was subsequently replaced by anthropological discourse, which in place of crime and punishment focussed its gaze on the figure of the criminal – on his natural propensities. What in fact was to be judged at a trial was, not the act, but specifically the criminal, his personality. The problem with this view is that it forgets the classical criminal-justice conception of evil, which Foucault links with what he called "juridico-discursive" power and which Kant epitomises in his writings about radical evil. Evil does not derive from original sin, nor can it be associated with warpedness of nature, but manifests itself solely in an act brought about by free will. From this point of view, Christian original sin and modern anthropological discourse, which emphasises the hereditary nature of a character with a criminal propensity, are no more than two variants of one and the same thing.

Let us, nevertheless, return to Kant. According to him, evil is not a demonic power that arises from the human body or that is a consequence of random events caused by environmental circumstances, but rather is something freely willed – a propensity contained within freedom itself. Kant, however, does not link evil so much with the act as with the maxim underlying that act. According to him we can specifically think of there being a maxim underlying all acts, a maxim that the human being can choose freely. A good act is then of the kind underlying which we can say is the right maxim. Kant calls such a maxim a moral law and sums up its content in *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals* as follows: "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law." For this reason, according to him, evil is all that is not in harmony with the universal imperative of moral law.

Kant distinguishes three distinct degrees in this capacity for evil. First,

evil can be the weakness of the human heart in the observance of moral law, or in other words, the frailty of human nature. Second, the propensity for evil can manifest itself in the human being mixing unmoral with moral motivating causes, which, according to Kant, indicates impurity of the human heart. It is impurity of the human heart when even if good acts are performed, the motivating causes for them are not moral law and respect for that law, but rather, for example, fame and honour. Third, the propensity to evil can be a propensity to adopt maxims that derive from evil itself, which in turn means the corruption and perversity of the human heart.

According to Kant, with "continuous labour" human beings can overcome their own weakness, purify their hearts of impure motives and fight their own corruption. On the other hand, according to him, the idea that a human being could set up *opposition* to the law as a maxim and a motivation is impossible. The human being would thereby be a devilish being, something he or she definitively is not. And what if Kant is wrong? What if a human being does exist who does evil specifically because the law prohibits the doing of evil? This is a question with which, for example, St Paul wrestled in his letters – finally coming to the conclusion that the law is a curse – and which Tuomas Nevanlinna writes about in his article "Radikaali ja diabolinen paha" (Radical and diabolical evil).

Nevanlinna's starting point is the observation made by the Slovenian Joan Copjec that moral law manifests to human beings only as guilt, in other words as a kind of traumatic pressure. This is because moral law has no positive content – this issue is in fact solely one of the form of the law: act according to *any* maxim that is such that you can hope it would become a universal law. Because moral law manifests only as a traumatic pressure, people have a natural propensity to resist it. Thus, the human being is exposed as being by nature a devilish being. According to Slavoj Zizek, devilish evil is in fact the ultimate truth about radical evil. The human being has a propensity to evil specifically because a moral law exists that prohibits evil. This being the case, prohibition in itself – and not, for example, the human being's selfish interests – is the origin of evil.

Nevanlinna himself, nevertheless, proposes that devilish evil can be thought of in yet another way. For Kant, evil is when, instead of pure duty, the impetuses for action are, for example, selfish interests. Nevanlinna,

however, points out that carrying out one's duty may in itself be selfish. There are undoubtedly people who experience pleasure specifically when fulfilling their duty. From this viewpoint Hannah Arendt's analysis of the "banality of evil" of Adolf Eichmann – the Nazi official who administered the concentration camps – appears in a new light. As Susanna Snell writes in her article "Radikaalista banaaliin pahaan" (From radical to banal evil), according to Arendt, Eichmann was anything but devilish. His evil was not perverse sadism, as was claimed at his trial, but rather an evil that springs from stupidity, from an inability to think. Eichmann had no motive for evil other than getting on in his job and doing his duty. He even defended himself at his trial by saying that he was only obeying the law, ultimately even appealing to Kant. And what if this kind of action for the sake of the law itself, in other words, acting out of pure duty, is the most devilish evil of all?

In his own article "Paha laki" (Evil law), Ari Hirvonen finally comes to the conclusion that law itself is radically evil. It has a natural propensity for evil. Nevertheless, he does not take this as a reason for proposing the abandonment of laws, or in other words, a return to some anarchistic state of lawlessness. Instead, the point of this idea is to prevent people from being lulled into becoming religious believers in the law. When we remember that the very foundations of the law contain a propensity for evil, which manifests itself in evil laws, we are better able to oppose those laws – already long before they have been put into effect. An organised community needs law, but a community that does not see beyond the law inevitably becomes a closed, totalitarian machine. It becomes a "juridical work", which will always give rise to its own Eichmanns. That is why the law has to be subject to continual questioning – or deconstruction. Only in that way can the community combat the radical evil of the law. Only in that way can such a thing as justice emerge.

All in all, *Evil in the European Tradition* constitutes quite an interesting whole. Coherent it isn't, but then nor is there such a thing as coherent evil. Nevertheless, what it loses in coherence it gains in depth. To end, however, we might ask whether evil is any longer necessary. What do we gain by talking about evil? Do we get to the core of evil? Or is it the case, as Jarna Petman writes in the concluding article, that resorting to the rhetoric of evil is just one way of breaking free of the demands of political dialogue. +

FRAGMENTS OF HUMANITY
Review by Ville Lähde

Despite its subtitle, Giorgio Agamben's *The Open: Man and Animal* isn't a book about human and non-human animals. The writer makes allusions to animal imagery in religious and secular art, and a detour into the history of zoology, but his real purpose is to make a bold statement about the philosophico-theological history of conceptions of humanity. The result is a fragmentary constellation of ideas that stem from a variety of sources, such as gnosticism, the Judaic tradition, Christian theology, the linguistic debates of early modernity, zoology and the precursors of ecology, the post-Hegelian debates of the early 20th century, Martin Heidegger and Walter Benjamin. With inventive yet impossibly broad strokes he bridges the intellectual gaps between these sources and proposes that a common lineage runs through Western thought. Against the commonplace notion of a strict dualism between humans and animals, he proposes that conceptions of humanity have been built up through a continuous process of separation *and* similarity. In short, according to Agamben, definitions of humanity were possible only by positing "animality" again and again without and within the sphere of humanity. This development he calls "the anthropological machine".

The Ends of History
Agamben presents his argument against the background of various conceptions of the End of History in western thought. The notion that the history of human struggle in the world, of conflict with external limitations and with problems in human organisation will end with a great historical transformation is, of course, present in many traditions. But Agamben seems to think that this is a defining feature of western ideological history. For him one of the 'eternal' problems has been the form humanity will take after the end of history. What is to become of Man after Redemption, in the Utopian political worlds, after the Revolution, after the end of dialectical history, after the fulfilment of the modern dream?

Pointing out similarities in the history of ideas is one thing, claiming that a metaphysical continuum exists is, however, another. For Agamben makes a claim that behind the diverse formulations there is a common way of thinking about humanity. A more general claim is linked to this: that *metaphysics* (in this case: exploration of the nature of human existence) is not a marginal field, that it is at the heart of the development of western politics. Metaphysical ideas have strong practical implications. Thus, he is able to propose not only that behind diverse ideas there is really one idea, but also that this overarching idea has nearly inevitable (trans)historical consequences. This basic notion makes the whole book a dubious exercise, since it detaches ideas of humanity and animality from the historical background in which they were created, and from the questions they were meant to answer. What is left is a pretty ahistorical stream of metaphysics. One would have thought that such endeavours were behind us, especially with regard to ideas about "human essence".

In the opening chapters Agamben explores the problem of the end of history mainly in the debates between Georges Bataille and Alexandre Kojève in the 30's. Both of them tangling with the heritage of Hegel's thought, both reading his ideas very literally, they debate the nature of trans-historical humanity. One is scarcely surprised that out of a host of possibilities Agamben chose these figures, since their readings of Hegel sidestep many difficult questions about the nature and intent of dialectics. Especially Bataille, with his mystical visions of the "headless", "leaderless" or "centerless" agent of the future, fits Agamben's story quite well. But even though Agamben tries to avoid it, it is clear even from his own interpretation how the discussions about the end of history in the early 20th century were linked to contemporary political visions: the end of scarcity with the advent of modern technology, and the end of political conflict with the rise of new political organisations – conquering 'nature' in two senses of the Hegelian tradition. There was genuine faith in an impending historical transformation, in a way that is very difficult to grasp today.

It almost seems that the whole 'end of history' perspective is a poetic tool that helps draw the reader into Agamben's stream of thought. For it serves merely as an introduction that reveals problems in the various conceptions of humanity. Both for the early Christian theologians and the late Hegelians the nature of human existence at the end of history was a conundrum. Humanity had been con-

structed as a meeting ground of bodily and spiritual elements, or as the historical conflict of spirit with body/animality. But what would the human being be after the conflict ended? Agamben supports this view by exploring how the Church Fathers debated the status of bodily functions in Paradise, or how the dialecticians had trouble with the idea of work after the end of history. According to him, the deeper problem is that there never was a stable notion of "humanity proper". The idea of the essence of humanity was presupposed, but it was never given a lasting definition. Instead humanity would always be redefined against the conflicting notions of the human and the animal.

The Anthropological Machine

It seems weird for humanity to be defined against the animal *and the human*. It takes some careful reading and friendly interpretation to excavate the idea Agamben has in mind. He is going against the idea that humanity has been mainly seen as a diametric counterpoint to animality. Instead the dividing line between human and animal has been set *within humans* themselves, between properties that supposedly belong to different worlds. Within the world of Christian theology this notion was still plausible, as it was founded on the duality of soul and body and on the mystery of their conjunction. Divine intervention was the obvious solution.

But, with the progress of secularisation, and the advent of modern scientific ideas, it became increasingly hard to keep this up. As a prime example Agamben takes up the language question of the 18th century. During the Enlightenment, in debates on human nature *language*, perhaps even more than freedom of will, became the prime candidate for the novel feature of humanity. But this raised another problem: the force that gave rise to language. Language was at the same time a human creation and the main human characteristic – to explain this one had to suppose some basic human quality. But the idea of language-intuition would merely shift the problem of humanity to new ground, while preserving it. Where did it come from? The advent of serious evolutionary ideas in the 19th century would make answering this idea increasingly difficult. New possibilities offered by evolutionary notions were blocked

by the tradition of looking for the human essence.

The problem with defining humanity gave rise to the idea of humans as world-constructing beings. Already in the 17th century, the idea arose that humans do not have an eternal essence, but that they are beings who partake in all essences by being able to mimic them, to appropriate them, and above all to create the world in which they live. To use an Enlightenment term, humans are *perfectible* beings. They are born with qualities 'of two worlds', the animal and the human. But even though things like freedom of will and the potential for change were seen as solely human qualities, humanity proper was a *condition* that was created by human activity. Humanity proper is not defined by human beings' bodily qualities, nor by metaphysical qualities like the soul. It is an existential condition of living in enduring relationships with other beings, and in humanity proper these are mediated by language. An important dimension is the ability to recognise other beings *as something*, and to expect recognition from others. These reciprocal ties are made possible by the conceptual realm that emerges with language.

The chapters where Agamben explores such ideas are the most interesting in the book, but one wonders whether they are plausible as a part of his overall historical story. For even though such ideas have been important for various thinkers, such as Rousseau, Kant, Hegel and Marx, it is debatable whether they form the mainstream of western thought – unless one supposes some deep metaphysical undercurrent as Agamben does.

Agamben believes that definitions of humans as world-constructing beings have strengthened the problem of defining humanity proper. For lacking any 'human nature' in the strong sense of the word, humans are thrust into an existence that is beyond any of the dualistic alternatives, into an existential gap between two worlds – "the Open". Basically this means that modern humanism is confronted again and again by attacks on its worldview. 'Animality' is produced within the human zone politically by animalising outsiders and enemies or scientifically by reducing humanity to animalistic characteristics. This process that seemingly inevitably destroys the foundation of modern human-

ism Agamben calls the anthropological machine.

Inevitable Outcomes?

The notion of the inevitable forward march of the anthropological machine is the most suspect part of this whole book. For it seems that, after all his intricate details, Agamben retreats into a reactionary defence of humanistic metaphysics (although claiming that humanism has sowed the seeds of its own destruction). Of course, he voices some legitimate concerns: the ability to strip other humans of all humanity, to make them mere resources or vermin to be squashed. But it is a leap of faith to think that such practices can be traced back to metaphysical ideas. Or rather there are two suspicious claims: first, that a multitude of historical ideas can be collated into one, and second, that all of them will have similar outcomes. Such a claim flies in the face of the historical nature of human existence. Ideas that in retrospect seem similar have performed very different functions, and "animalising Man" is no exception.

This is linked to another problem. I believe that Agamben has let the surface of words blind him. For him the notions "animal" and "animality" form a seamless whole. Thus, he links practical relations between human and non-human animals and the concept of the animal in them to much more highly-charged concepts of animality used in discourses about human existence – animality as driven behaviour, as uncontrollability, as bestiality… There are historical links between these formulations of 'animality', but the figure of the animal is, nevertheless, formed very differently for different purposes. When Agamben calls out in alarm against politics which "animalises" humans, he is saying much more about his own one-dimensional notion of "the animal" – and his implicit approval/ignorance of dominant practices towards non-human animals. Brutalising them isn't a problem, the problem is when these practices are repeatedly used against human animals.

Obscure Outcomes

In the end Agamben's own vision remains obscure. After an (in itself interesting) comparison between the ideas of Uexküll and Heidegger, he returns to the notions of the end of history, and the "messianic" ideas of

Walter Benjamin. I remain entirely unconvinced by his longwinded explanations of Heidegger's metaphysics that end up with the totalitarian situation of the mid-20th century. It is only with rhetorical appeals that he tries to convince his readers that the totalitarian tendencies are 'really' the result of a long metaphysical development, that Foucault's biopolitics has its historical roots in a metaphysical conflict between "the animality and humanity of man".

But I could live with such problems, as Agamben nevertheless offers interesting stuff here and there. But making such an obscure mixture a basis for political visions is frankly sinister. There is no other foundation than his word and allusions to works of art to convince us that it is meaningful to look at the present world from the perspective of the End of History. And there are only his ramblings to convince us that the world needs visions of the New Humanity. +

CAN ART DEAL WITH HUMAN SUFFERING?
Review by Yrjö Haila

The late social historian Roy Porter entitled his great history of medicine *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind*(1). There is no doubt that this catchphrase, attributed originally to Samuel Johnson, tells an important truth. Timo Joutsivuo offers evidence for its truthfulness in his essay in the catalogue for the exhibition *From Magic to Medicine* by citing graphic descriptions of the miseries brought about by syphilis – alternatively called 'Spanish disease', 'French disease', or 'Naples disease', depending on who did the naming – after it appeared in Europe in the 1490s. For instance, in 1566, Nicoló Leoniceno wrote as follows: "Victims suffered from mouth sores and eczema which sometimes wasted their lips away, ulcers that turned black, and tubercles which could spread even to the eyes." As the modern medical sciences have largely conquered this sort of overt physical pain, the word "benefit" is, indeed, fitting.

The agony and suffering brought about by disease have been an integral part of the human condition since the dawn of history. However, as Roy Porter(2) notes, this experience has only received sporadic attention in the historical record. Perhaps this lack has a natural explanation; perhaps pain and suffering defy words. How could one, for instance, honestly describe the ravages caused by syphilis that Nicoló Leoniceno lists above from the subjective perspective of the victim?

Furthermore, the suffering brought by disease has not been restricted to the physical realm. The 'old cemetery' in the city of Tampere, where we live, resembles a lush, downtown park, but like its analogues in innumerable other cities, it has old gravestones sticking up from the ground here and there underneath the old trees. Most of the gravestones date back to the second half of the 19th century, the era of the city's rapid industrialization. The texts on the stones tell a grim testimony: children used to die like flies in Tampere. A typical example: a half-buried broken stone with texts on both sides, on one side, "Here rest the children of Vivika and Gustaf Selin", and on the other, "Hilma Maria *18 12/1 63 † 18 20/2 63, Olga Matilda 18 21/12 63 † 18 30/1 65, Ivar Robert 18 1/5 70 † 18 22/11 71, Ivar Edvard 18 11/3 73 † 18 6/7 78, Olga Matilda 18 18/2 76 † 18 7/8 80."

Such gravestones are way beyond the reach of our contemporary imag-ination. What, for instance, remained of Vivika and Gustaf Selin's lives after the 17 years chronicled on the stone?

The *From Magic to Medicine, Science and Belief in 16th to 18th Century Art* exhibition and the accompanying catalogue are about the benefits brought to humanity by scientific medicine. The exhibition was produced in cooperation between Finnish and Italian cultural institutions. Sergio Rossi of Universitá di Roma "La Sapienza", the scientific coordinator of the Italian group, opens his introductory essay in the catalogue by noting that the motivation for the exhibition is "the idea that there is always a close connection between art and society, experienced life and its pictorial representation." And further on in the essay he writes: "The primary aspects of the exhibition, the scientific and the artistic, maintain a continuous dialogue. […] The public can follow – almost in a 'live transmission' – how painting has captured the sufferings and hopes of a specific period, how behind a front of dry scientific contemplation lie concealed the burning issues of the day, how the different classes in society and the regions of Europe faced the same problems and used their own cultural means to expel the forces of evil."

These are bold programmatic statements. The title of the exhibition conveys a similar programmatic feel: the phrase "from magic to medicine" suggests that the artworks shown in the exhibition and documented in the catalogue can somehow testify to a steady, progressive trend in medical thought and practice. However, a viewer of the exhibition or reader of the catalogue can find no support for such programmatic expectations. The majority of the paintings included in the exhibition can be roughly categorized under two themes. The first is the transformation of the medical profession. The alchemists and witches of old times are replaced by medical doctors of new times. The second is Christian charity. The paintings in the exhibition include replicas of old icons such as *The Good Samaritan* (by Nicola Malinconinco, before 1706), and *Pious Women Caring for Saint Sebastian* (by Bartolomeo Schedoni, 1615; reproduced on the cover of the catalogue), and several paintings of Christian Saints posing among sick people, mostly victims of the plague. In addition, however, the exhibition includes paintings which are only distantly, if at all, related to the literal theme of the exhibition (such as *David and Goliath* by Antonio Cifrondi, no date, and *The Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus* by Orazio Borgianni, c. 1612-14).

It is better to forget the grandiose framing of the exhibition and focus on the works themselves. Viewed against the programmatic expectations, they at the first sight seem flat, but a closer look reveals subtle, rich and powerful dimensions of meaning. Let's look at the five paintings showing saints among the sick. Behind a literal interpretation that would take them as representations of pious men giving consolation to suffering people condemned to die, there is another dimension: how is a human community possible during and after a plague? In other words, disease has always been a communal experience, and art works such as these have deepened the human, communal understanding of disease. It is doubtful whether we can ever get at the 'felt sense' of other human beings who have fallen victim to fatal disease, the arts fall speechless when confronted with the abyss of human suffering. What the arts can do, however, is create means for living on after personal and communal catastrophes. Take, for instance, *Saint John of God Cures the Sick of the Plague* (Lazzaro Baldi, c. 1690), which depicts a ghostly interior, perhaps of a monastery, filled with sick and dying people. The painting shows not only a Saint giving consolation to the miserable victims, but a whole scene giving consolation to the rest of us.

Consolation is inherent in the art of healing. Hence, medicine as a practical art has been embedded, or "spatialized"(3) in society all through its existence. Nothing else is possible, of course. An image of linear progress "from magic to medicine" does violence to the strivings and aspirations of the healers of the past centuries. As Timo Joutsivuo's essay in the catalogue demonstrates, there was a plenitude of different competing conceptions of health and illness in early modern Europe. There have been some ruthless charlatans around, but none of the old traditions should be given an overwhelmingly negative image.

Progress in medicine has been integrally woven together with social change more generally. In fact, the most important shift towards mod-ern medical science took place after the period covered by the exhibition, in the last decades of the 18th century. This transformation "broke not only with the 'true' propositions which it had hitherto been possible to formulate but also, more profoundly, with the ways of speaking and seeing, the whole ensemble of practices which served as supports for medical knowledge."(4)

Let's take a third look at the works reproduced in the exhibition catalogue. Within a broader perspective, even the works that are not really connected with the topic of the exhibition, if it is taken literally, speak to the general theme of human suffering, approaching it from various perspectives. A crucial question is: What has it been possible to see and say about suffering and disease in any particular era? Stories and myths about ancient martyrs have formed an important means of speaking about suffering in the Christian tradition. In other words, a painting such as *The Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus* has a firm place in this exhibition, after all.

Medicine gives consolation but it is also directed toward the future through the dream of conquering disease. However, as disease is part of our human nature, this dream gives rise to new kinds of ethical problems. Can medicine at some point take human destiny into its own hands? If it does, whose hands are we then actually speaking about? This kind of ambivalence is depicted in Abraham de Snaphaen's *Portrait of a Doctor* (1684): a doctor is sitting in his chair with his right hand resting on a human skull. The doctor's face looks sympathetic, worthy of confidence. A sick person would be well advised to seek his help. But the question remains: No matter what progress is made and what medical technologies are adopted, is there still a limit beyond which the medical profession falls short of answering our deepest worries about health and illness? +

(1) Roy Porter 1997. *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind. A Medical History of Humanity from Antiquity to the Present.* London: HarperCollins.
(2) Roy Porter 1993. "Pain and Suffering", in W. F. Bynum & Roy Porter (eds), *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*, pp. 1574-1591. London: Routledge.
(3) Michel Foucault 1973. *The Birth of the Clinic. An Archaeology of Medical Perception.* London: Tavistock Publications.
(4) Michel Foucault, *op. cit.*

framework News contents 2/2004:

Global Watch

Global Watch comments on international events. In *Framework* 2/2004, Sureyyya Evren (Istanbul) examines the concept of torture in the light of recent events in Iraq, while Nataša Petrešin (Ljubljana) analyses the events around Critical Art Ensemble, an activist art group that has for several years been dedicated to developing public awareness and discussion around biotech issues; Raul Zamudio (New York) tells about mobbing and its use in critical art and politics; and Mika Hannula (Helsinki/Berlin) looks at the recent public discussion over the opening of the Flick Collection in Berlin.

Kim Simonsson, *Protection*, 2003, ceramics, glass. Private Collection. Photo by Galen Kuellmer.

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in Istanbul, Turkey. *Translated from Turkish by
Neville Wells. Language editing Tomi Snellman.*

Sureyyya Evren

The Photographic Pincushion

It is a known fact that children who are unable to feel pain tend to die early and require extra diligent care; painlessness is not a gift, but a curse in disguise.

In contrast, the adult who feels no pain is usually thought to have superhuman powers. In some action/SF films, we see characters who undergo operations on their nervous systems to prevent them from feeling pain, making them immune to torture. Painlessness is construed as a kind of aspect of being superhuman. But while stargazing at these pain-impervious superhumans, we see that the person who does not suffer from pain, suffers in another way; we feel as if his humanity has vanished along with his sense of pain.

But because of its bizarreness, in a given society and time, the existence of a human impervious to pain can turn into a vaudeville show. One example is the story of Edward H. Gibson.(1) When Gibson was seven, he was struck in the skull with a lathing hatchet. He felt no discomfort at the time, except for a headache that lasted several days. Mostly, however, he lived a life immune from the normal electrochemical penalties that flesh is heir to.

Up to the age of seven Gibson knew what pain was, but after the accident he never felt anything again. We can contrast his case with that of an ordinary torture victim, who knows and remembers what it is not to feel pain at the very moment he is tortured.

Anyway, Gibson, 'the man impervious to pain', tried to decide what he could gain from this 'ability'. He decided to take his unique place in the history of the American entertainment industry and soon made his name as *The Human Pincushion, Edward H. Gibson*. In the 1920s, he spent almost two years on the American vaudeville stage. Twice a day, clad only in shorts, Gibson would walk on stage and ask a man in the audience to stick pins in him anywhere except the abdomen

and groin. Some fifty or sixty pins, carefully sterilized, would be inserted up to their heads. The crucial point of his show was that there was no illusion, the absence of which was unlikely to win him many admirers.

Thus Gibson marked the early stages of modern show business with an act, where real torture is made into a show with audience participation.(2)

Gibson wanted to take his act further and, as a special stunt, he planned a re-enactment of the Crucifixion. He prepared a rough cross and four gold-plated spikes with sharp points. On the appointed day, the Human Pincushion spread his arms against the wooden cross. A man with a sledgehammer drove the first spike through the palm of Gibson's hand – at which point a woman in the audience fainted dead away.

Insensitivity to *moral pain* has also been considered a kind of 'abnormality'. It has been used by many people and societies as a justification for attacking others considered so barbaric they had no sensibility to moral pain. With their incurable immorality, such 'others' deserve, even need, to be controlled and guided by an occupying army.

However, this was explained by the Western theory of civilization, which set up a progressive scheme for things. It placed the shameless others on the lowest level, condemning them as backward, old cultures with no self-control. Many Eurocentric writers even went so far as to condemn their own past, Medieval Europe, as well as native peoples and cultures outside Europe for not feeling enough shame and thus being primitive.

These primitives behaved more publicly in matters such as nakedness, sexuality or urinating. People in Medieval Europe and in 'uncivilized societies' were considered to be childish in this respect. Norbert Elias suggested that the emotional structure and consciousness of these uncivilized people were childish, because

they were still undergoing processes civilized people had already passed in history. Shame only appeared in higher levels of culture. The suppression of sexual compulsions does not exist in human nature as such, it is gained by an advanced culture.(3)

This theory was used to legitimize colonial practices and slavery by stating that the purpose was to civilize the shameless. With their primitive body politics lacking in self-control, the shameless natives represented a very early stage of human development. Military occupation of their land was undoubtedly a good way to guide them towards learning shame and self-control. Baghdad, the city of harems and fantasies of Arabian nights, has been the target of this approach many times in the past.

This time, however, as demonstrated by the prison abuses in Abu Ghraib, the notion of a shame threshold is used in the opposite way than before, when it was used to legitimize occupation.

Yet it is the same thing because we witness the same occupation politics, the same linear scheme, the same "follow me, I am a champion!" sticker; but today, the meaning of being ashamed works the other way around.

Some U.S. consultants analyzing the Iraqis and Arabs concluded that they are too conservative in their sexuality. Sexuality for them, especially homophobia, was a vulnerability. It was decided to use these weak points in interrogation. The interrogators concentrated on sexually humiliating scenes. In the torture fantasies carried out in Abu Ghraib, U.S. forces created an almost perfect one-on-one harmony with pornographic images. A urination scene, a woman holding a man by a leash, underwear on the face for sniffing, a group of naked men piled up on top of each other, were familiar sex (and also porn) possibilities for a civilized citizen.

Now the scale was turned upside down; shamelessness or lack of self-control was no longer considered

a symptom of primitiveness. Instead, extreme shame and extreme self-control were read as such. U.S. soldiers, say at that specific scene of holding the leash, were not humiliating Iraqi detainees merely by holding the leash, but also by implying that they are backward primitives who do not understand contemporary sex and are capable of being deeply hurt by simple sexual acts. In a way, the inability to assimilate the new shame culture of post-sexual revolution societies was interpreted as a sign of primitiveness.

There used to be an illusionary, oriental image of the 'harems' of Baghdad, four wives–one man, fantastic orgies and baths for joy and satisfaction, women volunteering to be sex slaves, lazy yet always tough men, using power just to have a good time, a dazzling picture of an uncivilized people. Later, thanks to Western modernization, they, albeit with very slowly and gradually, managed at least partly to start becoming civilized. Modernization showed the way of one man–one wife, the way of modern everyday life, inalienable women's rights. And instead of sex addicted leisure, a working culture was imposed with an orderly sexual life. More control, more shame, more civilization.

But today, Baghdad is once again considered uncivilized. And this time for feeling too much shame. Iraqis or Afghans, being less civilized (or uncivilized), can never guess the contemporary shame levels of civilization to which they must adapt, can never guess how much shame they should feel.

While the 'civilized world' is creating opportunities for people who want soiled women's underwear on their faces, while man-to-man and woman-to-woman marriages are spreading and taboos everywhere are disappearing, while all behaviour once condemned as pagan is being embraced, while gender identities are merging and boundaries are disappearing, while sadomasochist alternatives are taking form, becoming more

common and open and creating their own institutions, and while every fetish is getting its deserved rights, this 'uncivilized world' in Iraq is experiencing sexuality as if it were a disease to cure – just as it was before but in a diametrically opposite fashion. Their extreme sexual sensitivity becomes an open sign of their uncivilized character – and there the abuse starts.

Everything is designed to rub the fact in their faces that sexuality is too touchy a thing for them. So, during torture, they not only experience pain, but are also told that they are too barbaric to be a masochist! And masochism requires an environment of mutual freedom, where mutual wills can join for pleasure.

In Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's classic novel *Venus in Furs*, the main characters Wanda and Severin want to act out their master-slave fantasies to the end in a foreign land. They are worried that they will not be able to live out these fantasies in the manner they want in their hometown. So Severin (the slave) suggests to Wanda that they go to a country where slavery still exists, to the Orient, to Turkey. This journey to the East to experience slavery voluntarily sounds nice to Wanda at first. But then she changes her mind and refuses to sign the contract for Istanbul. "No," she says, "I have thought things over. What special value would there be in owning a slave where everyone owns slaves. What I want is to have a slave, I alone, here in our civilized sober, Philistine world, and a slave who submits helplessly to my power solely on account of my beauty and personality, not because of law, of property rights, or compulsions. This attracts me."

On the other hand, sexual humiliation during torture is not new, nor was Iraq the first place U.S. forces engaged in torture. Neither was the U.S. the first to bring torture to the Middle East.

What is new is the number torture images circulating. The stage-managed scenes and camera angles are striking, the widespread distribution of these moments is new, to add them to the general visual flow in the media is compelling – two million hits for real political torture is startling...

The torture and abuse images coming from Abu Ghraib pose the ques-

tions of how these photos were presented, and how this presentation can be analyzed as a show and as politics.

Remember the first images that came from Abu Ghraib. The torture scene, in which Lynndie R. England was playing her role with enthusiasm, was one of the first Abu Ghraib images we came across. While we were expecting to see images of occupying male soldiers raping women, as we know happens in most wars, what we saw was a woman, England, with a cigarette in her mouth, showing the genital organs of naked 'native' men, their faces hidden in bags.

Yes, that is all she does, just shows – still, the photo gives such a feeling of torture.

However, the gesture of her hands looks like she is miming holding a machine gun. We are witnessing a female occupier, showing captured naked penises with a gesture of shooting them with a machine gun – at the same time, her hand gestures and the way she stands with her left foot in front, the way she is slightly leaning towards the naked penises, reminds me of a more common scene, where a showman is presenting a new addition to the show. Applause. Applause. Till our palms glow red.

Torture took its place in the show world of the 21th century with these photos, and surreptitiously became part of the entertainment industry.

The female torturer from the 'civilized' country with inalienable women's rights is showing us the uncivilized penises she has captured, smiling, possibly accompanied by a melody. Whatever, this is a fascinating show. A show that threatens very many people.

The viewing and consumption of torture, too, has often been considered a stage in the torture process. In the Inquisition – one of the first institutions that comes to mind when one thinks about torture – different stages were designed to break down resistance. In some applications, the first stage was to threaten the victim with possible torture. The Inquisition could pass on to another stage, if this verbal threat was not enough: the victim would be taken to the dungeon of the torture chamber, where the implements of torture were on display like an exhibition.

Hundreds of years later, the same implements and tools used by the Inquisition to show and to torture were actually exhibited in a "torture exhibition". And this exhibition travelled to many historical and prestigious venues all over Europe, as well as in Japan, Argentina and Mexico.(4)

The Abu Ghraib detainees have also said in their statements that they remember being endlessly photographed as a kind of torture.

Looking at some of the statements provided by the Abu Ghraib detainees, we clearly see the important role of photography. The two most common abuses they witnessed can be categorized as: beating and everybody taking photographs of everything.

One detainee says they told him to stroke his penis in front of an American female soldier. Guards were "taking pictures."

Their statements contain details of how guards ordered them to masturbate, then took pictures, and ordered them to bend over like dogs and took pictures again. "They were taking pictures of everything they did to me." Most of the "abuse" was posing for photographs unwillingly.

It is also strange that they wanted detainees to stroke their penises so frequently, as if they were playing porn scenes, but at the same time also masturbating like they were watching one, like they were consuming one. (It reminds me of the "Masturbation" works of Gillian Wearing – masturbation in masturbation and for masturbation, and the transferring power of the image.)

And then, this systematic photographing of everything ended with publishing them everywhere.

These 'show tortures', designed for exhibition, this new trend, may be the new torture concept for Iraq, or generally the Middle East, or for the so-called 'clash of civilizations'. This concept can be transferred and transformed into a global torture concept.

After the events, Zizek said, "And the fact that the case turned into a public scandal that put the U.S. administration on the defensive is a positive sign. In a really 'totalitarian' regime, the case would simply be hushed up. (In the same way, the fact that U.S. forces did not find weapons of mass destruction is a positive sign: A truly

(1) Details of the Edward H. Gibson case are taken from *The Culture of Pain*, by David B. Morris, University of California Press, 1991, pp 12-15.
(2) Here, maybe we can recall Bob Flanagan (27 December 1952–4 January 1996), American writer, poet, performance artist and comic. He also suffered from Cystic fibrosis (CF), who used BDSM to convert his pain into pleasure and his art. Some of his performances were notable for acts of extreme masochism (on at least one occasion he hammered nails through his own scrotum, while cracking jokes). Some say he was killing the pain coming from a serious sickness with intended pain for the pleasure of masochism.
(3) For the discussion of this thesis of Elias and such, see Hans Peter Duerr's *Der Mythos vom ZivilisationsprozeB: Band I, Nacktheit und Scham.* (*Çıplaklık ve Utanç, Uygarlaşma Sürecinin Miti: I,* translated to Turkish by Tarhan Onur, Dost Kitabevi, 1999, Ankara.) Duerr shatters the myth of shameless natives and Medieval Europe by many examples.
(4) See http://www.torturamuseum.com/this.html.
(5) What Rumsfeld Doesn't Know That He Knows About Abu Ghraib, Slavoj Zizek, In These Times, 21 May 2004. http://www.inthesetimes.com/site/main/article/what_rumsfeld_doesnt_know_that_he_knows_about_abu_ghraib.

'totalitarian' power would have done what cops usually do – plant drugs and then 'discover' the evidence of crime.)" he was taking these 'defensive positions' as democratic signs.(5)

However, the confession of U.S. forces saying that they could find no weapons of mass destruction, could also be read as a bad sign – why should a ruling power have to 'plant drugs' when it can confess that there are none, but still punish for 'possession'?

Can this not be considered as evidence of a more advanced totalitarianism? Maybe this is not a 'genuine totalitarian regime', but 'another totalitarian regime'. While occupying forces can easily kill people without feeling the need to give much of an explanation, while they are able to bomb a wedding party to add another small massacre to the history of the region, and feel that it is enough explain that "bad people can also hold a party," they are likely to give birth to a new totalitarian regime, one that does not seek to control every little detail and aspect of life as happens in a 'genuine totalitarian regime', but an eclectic totalitarian regime, where values are temporary and formed according to their place in international interests.

And introducing uncivilized slave penises was this regime's show time… +

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Raul Zamudio

Flash Mobsters

In the past couple of years, there have been groups of people who come together in various cities throughout the world for ten minutes or so, and then disappear. No, these are not U.F.O. abductions, although the collective cameo appearances certainly result from the technology of instantaneous communication. These gatherings have come to be called "Flash Mobs." More often than not, Flash Mobs are organized by way of electronic correspondence. Usually e-mails are sent out to people, directing them to meet in a heavily trafficked public space, and not until the participants arrive are they given information as to what to do after reaching their destination. Here is one scenario that happened in New York as reported by a journalist: "On July 2, participants passed around an e-mail telling them to assemble at the food court in Grand Central Station, where organizers (identifiable by the copies of the New York Review of Books they were holding) then gave mobbers printed instructions regarding what to do next. The result: Shortly after 7 p.m., about 200 people suddenly assembled on the mezzanine level of the Grand Hyatt Hotel next to Grand Central Station, applauded loudly for 15 seconds, then left."

On the one hand, Flash Mobs seem to be nothing more than a case of individuals having too much time on their hands; for their inception had more or less a fraternity-house mentality to them. They amounted to stunts or jokes that dovetailed on information systems and turned communications technologies into an idiosyncratic mode of collective interaction, however politically benign their outcome. Yet it is possible that the Flash Mob's post-Situationist dimension can be harnessed for more interesting political strategies as well as for artistic practice. One artist who seems to have bridged these two aspects towards a more critical articulation of mobbing as social and political intervention goes by the somewhat innocuous name of Reverend Billy.

Rev. Billy has expunged the collegiate mentality of mobbing and has opted for an interventionist undertone that invokes Hans Georg Gadamer's reception aesthetics as well as its offspring found in Nicolas Bourriad's relational aesthetics. While the interactive contingency of mobbing is self-evident, it offers interesting possibilities of an ad hoc guerrilla nature that makes it indebted to other groups in the past who were conflating art, politics, and the public sphere. And here I am referring to older groups such as the Guerilla Art Action Group, Art Worker's Coalition, and more recently Critical Art Ensemble, as well as another form of post-Situationist activity that goes by the name of Culture Jamming. The last tactic concerns the appropriation of public advertisements where critical insertions consist of the subtle tweaking of what Theodor Adorno called the culture industry, and the spectacles needed to create its consumption that is fueled by the myriad forms of multinational capitalism: culture jamming tactically reconfigures corporate semiotics in the appropriation of corporate logos and market advertising which, in turn, are deconstructed to convey their antithesis. Thus, for example, the Gap ad where James Dean is touted as wear-

ing khakis and consequently buying this product would connect one with celebrity status, has been inverted to its counterpart in the guerilla, high-jacked version that states that "Hitler wore khakis" as well. Other forms of intervention are much more demure; and, in fact, that is where the power of this strategy of insertion achieves the most resonance: the re-configured work almost attains simulacral proportions.

A historical work that deploys such modus operandi to the point that it may never have even registered at all as an artwork is the Brazilian Cildo Meireles' stealthily appropriated Coca-Cola bottles, Brazilian currency, and American dollars. Made as a response to the repression and censoring of art by the Brazilian military junta, the Coca-Cola bottles, cruzeros and dollars were stamped with messages such as "Yankees go Home" and "What is the place of the work of art?" Titled *Insertions into Ideological Circuits,* the works became the inverse of the Duchampian readymade by way of poetic subversion of the public sphere. In one sense, the interventions seized a mode of transaction: social constellations by which money circulates; and this is one thing that can be the veritable ground zero where politics, criticality, and the public sphere intersect; and that could be the Bull's eye of flash mobs if it were to enter the register of artistic practice with a more critical reflexivity of its historicity. And faced with a similar form of censorship in New York because of terrorism and the Iraq War – as was the case during Meireles and his interventions under the Brazilian dictatorship – it is imperative to seize the means of communication for political ends that feign artistic ones. For this has been the modus operandi of flash mobbers like Rev. Billy, who has deployed post-Situationist strategies in a post 9/11 world.

In fact, the most recent conversion of Rev. Billy and his "congregation" was a "mass baptism" that consisted of

Above: Rev. Billy, 1st Amendment Mob, Ground Zero, NYC, 2004.

Right: Rev. Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping, NY, NY, 2004.

exercising free speech at Ground Zero where the Twin Towers were destroyed in the World Trade Center attacks. Below is an email that was sent as a sort of call-to-arms to New Yorkers: "FIRST AMENDMENT MOB EVERY Tuesday!"

Come and recite the single sentence that guarantees the right of free speech and peaceable assembly... First, memorize the 1st Amendment, or wear it on your sleeve, or have a friend prompt you over a cell phone.

Enter the station repeating phrases of the Amendment. As you do this, you will be surrounded by others on cell phones doing the same thing. Pretend you don't know them. Then, after ten minutes of repetition, say the whole thing forcefully. We all get better at the same rate and gather, reciting the great words in unison. We become a crowd with one common statement. Finally: We repeat the phrase big and clean. The room is "live" and acts as a

natural amplifier – this is exciting.

While this collective form of performance art may seem as a naïve gesture in the face of the political urgency necessitated in more socially explosive areas around the world, its most effective aspect may be that it draws attention to an irony unfortunately measured in human lives: deaths in Iraq continue to mount as the Bush administration exports its brand of democracy, though democ-

racy is paradoxically stifled within U.S. borders to the degree that to express political views against the Bush administration is criminal, as evinced by the illegal detainment of protestors during and after the Republican National Convention in New York City. Because Flash Mobbers have been jailed for exercising what supposedly is being defended in Iraq, they, in one sense, have now become Flash Mobsters. +

Mika Hannula

Some Like It Big

A new showcase collection in a newly renovated building has been opened in the otherwise rather frozen institutional contemporary artscape of Berlin. It is a colossal up to 2,500 piece achievement that goes under the name of its main agent, Friedrich Christian Flick. The freshly painted palace is a large ex-storage hall right next to the Hamburger Bahnhof art complex opened not so long ago.

So, Berlin has a major 1990s contemporary art collection on loan for seven years and a brand new site to boot. Well, that's fine and oh so great, but wait a second: what's all the fuss about? Why all the talk, why all the scandals (as in plural) and why was the opening night on the BBC main news? What's the big deal here?

In fact, even if it does not at first sight seem so, parking the Flick Collection in the city of Berlin is indeed a BIG DEAL (as in block letters). It is both big and a deal, each on its own, and together an event which will – for better and for worse – continue to make headlines and waves for a long time to come. The story goes that they had prepared a thousand folders for the press. Material that was all gone by the next day, if you choose to believe the numerous aggressively unfriendly *frauleins* at the entrance. Whatever one thinks of the lack of hospitality in the city, the obvious question is how much of a chance do the artworks have against the politicized hullabaloo circling around the collection like real latter-day vultures?

Let me start by explaining why the event is BIG. Looking at it from the vantage point of contemporary art, the collection is without doubt one of the most significant privately bought and owned collections of art made since the major changes in the early

1990s. It articulates and addresses all the main phenomena of the last 10 to 15 years, excessive and trashy installations and custom-made video installations included. In short, what we have here is the widely extended and expanded field of contemporary art practice seen through numerous works by artists such as Paul McCarthy, Bruce Nauman and Pipilotti Rist.

It is also BIG because of its size and the price tag. In the current version of the exhibit, they have managed to include about 400 works. This still leaves over 2,000 works in storage. And the price? Well, it would be insignificant if it did not happen to be a central part of the whole discussion (we will come to that in a minute), but the estimated value is 125 million euros. Thus, the scale of the event is nothing less than mind-blowing. Who would have time to buy all those works? Why would anyone want to own that many works of art? And finally, is the collection any good?

Well, to give a brief answer to the last question, it certainly is in keeping with the overall concept. The works are very BIG both in attitude and accomplishment. Jason Rhoades almost fills the main hall of the Hamburger Bahnhof with his crazy piece that focuses on the idea of man as a creator. As a work, it is as extreme as they get, and therefore it becomes - perhaps unintentionally - a spectacle you can envy, despise or hallucinate with, but not a piece that invites you to be quietly and closely with it.

Moving on: why is it a DEAL? This is easiest to explain by pointing out that *Herr Flick* is not just any Flick. The collector in question is a grandson of the late *Third Reich* industrialist Flick, who made a huge fortune in business, among other things

by arms sales and also by using forced labour during the Second World War. Thus, Flick's name, his past and his money are tainted. The name of Flick is one of the main symbols for the wealth produced during the *Third Reich* and also, perhaps more importantly, for the wealth that continued to grow almost uninterrupted after the war. To be sure, Flick is NOT the only family name connected to the National Socialists, but among hundreds of others it certainly is the one most eagerly searching for full media coverage.

Now, the DEAL is a major one, because Flick has long been on the lookout for a place for his collection. At the beginning, the plan was to build a new museum for it in Zurich. That DEAL never happened due to loud and angry local protests. However, Berlin is definitely not Zurich. The city of Berlin, candidly acknowledging its financial chaos and its fading star as the apparent metropole of creative industries, was more than happy to welcome *Herr Flick* into its domain. The city provided the space and Flick paid for the renovation. A horrible whitewash and terrible blood money, said the protesters.

However, at first, the DEAL did not cause that much of a heartache. The sound of the unconvinced and the concerned grew by the minute as the opening of the collection drew nearer. It took a while, but once the hordes of activists of the most moralistic kind saw the window of opportunity, there was nothing that could hold them back. The Flick Collection gave the public a magnificent blank cheque in the form of a huge screen on which to project a great many of the ills of mankind's past, present and future. It must be said in *Herr Flick's* defence
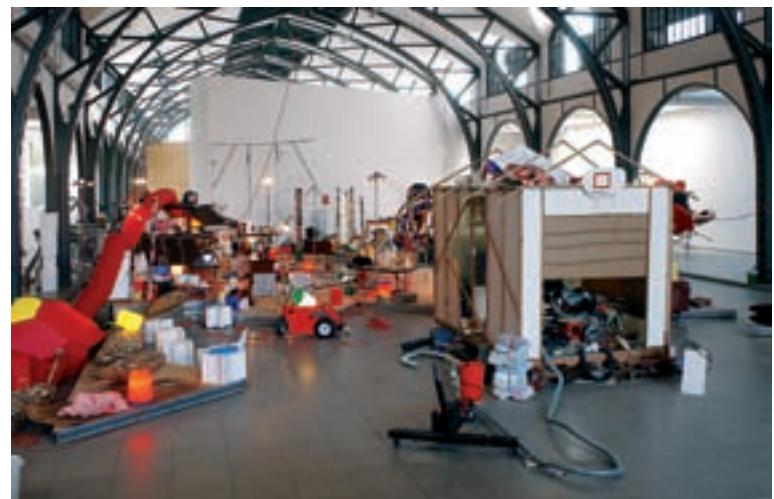
that even if he denied paying for the recent international fund set up for the "forced labourers" (Zwangsarbeiter), he did start up a new institute in Potsdam for studying racism, and has never denied his past or his responsibility.

So, who are these people actively protesting? It comes as no big surprise that among the artists it was Hans Haacke, of course, who flaunted his morals in an outburst by stating that the collection was paid for by "slave labour", or that the "official" politically correct art institute of the city, NGBK (Die Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst), should stage an open podium discussion and even form a working group under the title of *"Weisser Ritter"* (White Knight) to take up the initiative on how to salvage the current bankruptcy of values. Besides known actors, also some up-and-coming or down-and-going artists gave voice. Klaus Staeck, who

calls himself an actionist artist, printed a thousand postcards demanding free entrance to the exhibition for former forced labourers. The same artist also touched another raw nerve: the question of money, and who does and who does not pay taxes. He made another set of postcards and put up a large poster opposite the museum stating that "tax evaders, show your goods" – referring to *Herr Flick's* status as a resident of Switzerland.

On the public side, the DEAL became loud theatre in which many of the prominent faces in the current *Berliner republik* felt a need to participate. The sweet smell of soap opera could not have grown stronger, when *Herr Flick's* dear sister openly distanced herself from her brother and advised him to postpone the opening. The dramatis personae of the play were rounded off when Chancellor Schröder with the help of another famous collector, Heinz Berggruen,

came to *Herr Flick's* rescue.

Finally, why call it a BIG DEAL? Is this more than just a typically coded action and reaction by German society trying to face its past, while either voluntarily forgetting both the past and the present, or opportunistically locking itself in with an instrumentalized version of the past? The reason why this opening of an art collection deserves the title BIG DEAL is that it is already some time since an event dealt with the terrors of history that hardly anybody can avoid. It has already become public property, rapidly leaving behind the original dilemma and therefore emerging as something more, something bigger.

It is a never-ending discussion that involves necessary attention on how German society is still trying to come to terms with its past, and how that past still plays a role in the present. If anything, it is a very complex and open-ended issue of individual

and collective responsibility, one that cannot be solved by wholesale blaming and demonization of any single person, such as *Herr Flick*.

But what about the art? In events of this scale, when the ball starts rolling for real, it is obvious that art is nothing more than a decoration, even if it be a huge, awfully expensive and loud decoration. On centre stage we have the Flick Collection as the lowest common denominator to participate in the production of meanings in a public sphere. The results of this heterogeneous production might not be very high-brow, or even the desired confrontation with versions of the past, but nobody can deny the fact that it is a BIG DEAL; an incredibly productive debate that might even in due course produce something other than just another endless source for art historians to write one more fantastically witty post-pneumatic-traumatic critical Ph.D. on. +

Left: Paul McCarthy, *Bear and a Rabbit*, 1991, fake fur, metal, foam rubber, pedestal. Friedrich Christian Flick Collection, Berlin. Photo by Roman März, Berlin.

Right: Jason Rhoades, *The Haemorrhoidal Installation*, 2004, mixed media. Friedrich Christian Flick Collection, Berlin. Photo by Roman März, Berlin.

Due to an overall danger of various forms of terrorism, paranoia as a state-of-the-art has developed after 9/11 into an actual reality of the globalised world, the one which is burdened by the past colonial, social and psychological exploitation of the inferior or minor layers of society and by the ever-present cultural and capital hegemony of the First World over the Third World. What is happening before our eyes, which are pinned to the mass media and the World Wide Web, seems like the most tasteless and worst case scenario, yet we all participate in it. The narrow-mindedness of the most powerful states that still decide the fate of most geopolitical situations on our planet includes searching for scapegoats. The search allows them to avoid (and for how long?) all real, effective and realisable solutions, ones that in any case are not in their interests. Dr. Steven Kurtz, the founder of the art collective Critical Art Ensemble and associate professor at the art department of the University of Buffalo, and Dr. Robert Ferrell, Kurtz's collaborator and professor of genetics at the University in Pittsburgh, charged with mail and wire fraud in a federal court arraignment in Buffalo this spring, are such scapegoats in an absurd and terrifying court process. The trial, which is actually only now beginning, brings forth catastrophic consequences to the freedom of creativity and artistic expression, to unrestrained artistic and interdisciplinary research, and to the right of all individuals and lay audiences to knowledge concerning the biopolitical mechanisms that directly steer the course of bare life.

Critical Art Ensemble (CAE) is an art collective consisting of five activists coming from the fields of computer graphics, performance, photography, film, video and text art. Since the foundation of the collective in 1987, they have been one of the key elements in international theoretic discourse and artistic activist practice, civil disobedience, resistance and the basic right to knowledge. The group has been exploring the kinships between art, science, technology, political activism and critical theory. Their artistic mission involves interventions, introducing the potential of tactical media, capital and power in the information society. Most recently they have

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Nataša Petrešin

Art as Next Terrorist Suspect?

revealed the strategies, interests, dangers and manipulations with which hermetically sealed scientific circles and the escalating development of the biotechnological industry are misleading the public. Critical Art Ensemble has defined the role of the artist as one according with the transforming nature of engaged art. They see the artistic position and function as an operation by a public amateur within a system of transparent financial support for the arts and visibility in the public domain. Working as a collective for many years, they have created performative, interactive and participatory projects, advocated the methodology of and necessity for interdisciplinary research and published five books[1].

In recent years, CAE has unfailingly demystified the strategies of the biotechnological industry in their participatory projects, wherein they develop practical models and situations where the audience can confront its own fear of science: *"By interacting with us and our models [where the audience can develop harmless transgenic bacteria, raise bacteria found within their bodies and take them home, or observe the process of identifying genetically modified organisms in the most common food products] they hopefully developed some understanding of the potential risks involved in the positive use of transgenic organisms."*[2] Acting out the role of amateur biotechnicians and scientists, the collective's own term for their performative methodology is *"contestational biology initiative"*[3]. This format has allowed them to investigate the methods, equipment and databases of the professional scientific sphere

in search for answers to politicised questions about the representation and control of food products that the biotechnological industry has achieved under the supervision of multinational companies.[4] In these projects, analogical to their earlier critical projects about the Internet, tactical media and hacktivism, Critical Art Ensemble have succeeded in establishing their main thesis about the necessity and right of all individuals to information, about *"knowledge as a commons which is as vital as the air that we breathe."*[5].

Let me summarise how the story evolved from a tragic event into an absurd court process. On the 11th of May, 2004, Steve Kurtz's wife Hope suddenly died.[6] The emergency medical team discovered that the cause of death was heart failure. Since Hope's death was unexpected, the local police searched the apartment. On Steve's table they found scientific material – equipment for biological research and for identifying genetically modified organisms, basically the material for the CAE project *Free Range Grain*. The police considered the material suspicious and called in the FBI, the material was impounded for examination, the equipment was confiscated and Steve was detained, disregarding his hurtful situation. Despite the analysis of the seized materials by the Commissioner of Public Health for New York State, who declared that they posed no risk to public safety, and despite the fact that the same materials can be obtained legally by anyone, the investigation continued with a view to unearthing evidence to charge Steve

Critical Art Ensemble, *Flesh Machine*, performance June 12-13, 1998, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki. Photo by Nana Hietanen/Central Art Archives. © Finnish National Gallery.

with possession of a potential biological weapon and therefore being capable of committing a terrorist act. The artist thus became an amateur terrorist. Subpoenas to appear before a federal grand jury have been served also to some other members and collaborators of the collective, to scientists and artists who hold academic positions and are public personalities. Autonomedia, the cult publishing house that published CAE's books, was most recently subpoenaed. Kurtz and his colleagues have been charged under Section 175 of the U.S. Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989 as expanded by the USA Patriot Act – a very sensitive law after 9/11 – which prohibits the use of certain biological materials for anything other than a "*prophylactic, protective, bona fide research, or other peaceful purpose*"(7). In his text, posted on the nettime mailing list, Konrad Becker commented upon this Act as "*justification for a campaign not only against immigrants, but also against critical journalists, scientists, and recently also artists,*" adding that "*Steve Kurtz has publicly denounced the patenting of the biosphere and the role played by corporations, and recently examined the transgenetic contamination of food products. His attempt to use artistic means to make the genetic manipulation of the food chain and the practices of the bio industry visible have meant that state authorities dazed by paranoia now view him as a 'terrorist.*"(8) On the 30th of June, Steve Kurtz was arraigned and charged in the Federal District Court in Buffalo. The court could not charge both defendants with bioterrorism – as it was listed on the original search warrant and subpoenas – but managed to charge them with mail and wire fraud for obtaining the harmless bacteria for their artistic and scientific research, with a maximum sentence of 20 years imprisonment. As stated in the press release of the CAE Defense Fund, the laws in this indictment are generally used against people defrauding others of money or property. Historically, they have been used when the government has been unable to show any other criminal intent. The bacteria are meant to be used only for scientific purposes and are labelled as property. Due to the market-driven control of scientific research, they are protected under copyright laws

and also protected as a type of military secret. In the opinion of the so-called 'leaders of the free world', these are the very issues that make scientific and economic progress possible. Using the University of Pittsburgh's laboratory under what were termed 'fraudulent pretences', Robert Ferrell obtained three harmless strains of bacteria and delivered them to Steve to be used in his future projects (*GenTerra*, 2001) – illegally from the judicial perspective. Even the possession of grain that CAE used in their projects in museums in America and throughout Europe was perceived to be problematic (*Molecular Invasion*, 2002). The trial has just begun, and under the conditions of arraignment Kurtz is subject to travel restrictions, random and scheduled visits from a probation officer, and periodic drug tests.

Since the beginning of the harassment, the CAE Defense Fund has

been the source of financial, moral and information support. It produces accurate reports on the course of events, publishes comments from fellow scientists and artists, collects signatures for a public support letter and also donations to pay the fees of the lawyers of both defendants. Professors, journalists and the employees of *Nature* magazine, UC Santa Barbara and UC San Diego, have responded with similar statements about the threat to academic collaboration, interdisciplinary research and the freedom of expression: "*We see here a pattern of behaviour that leads to the curtailing of academic freedom, freedom of artistic expression, freedom of interdisciplinary investigation, freedom of information exchange, freedom of knowledge accumulation and reflection, and freedom of bona fide and peaceful research. All of which are fundamental rights and cornerstones of a modern academic environ-*

ment."(9) In spite of the massive support of cultural circles, one should not overlook the somewhat reactionary opinion of Coco Fusco, who in the beginning of June posted on the nettime list her own opinion on the support that she thinks "*would best be directed at public officials, law enforcement and the media, rather than continuing to preach to the converted.*"(10). Fusco also noted the similarity with the situation in the 1960s, when the FBI, as now, worked with other branches of government and organisations to generate far-reaching campaigns against leftists. At the same time, Fusco expressed the wish that people concerned about the Kurtz case – which has the advantage of very good media and financial support – should also show concern for all other cultural interventionists who are confronted with the same, if not even greater, repression and are unable to achieve the same degree of visibility.

Contemporary visual, performative and media arts with a critical stance can be regarded as temporarily occupying both symbolic and real space and time, performing consolidated rituals, gestures and interaction between the audience and the work of art, while also enabling the emergence of necessary new meanings and interpretations within the commodified interaction between the audience and art. Irit Rogoff talks about the viewers' shift from an analytic to a performative function of observation and participation as the "*potential of performative audiences to allow meaning to take place in the present*" which also allows that "*criticism does not have to be enacted at a distance but can take place and shape in the realm of the participatory… There is no meaning then if the meaning is not shared,*"(11) she writes, quoting Jean-Luc Nancy. Despite the popular belief in its harmlessness, contemporary art represents itself with the laws of transgression, direct confrontation and awareness about responsibility towards oneself and others. This fact and the seriousness of the Kurtz and Ferrell case are proof that the general harmlessness of the art world is relocating into a zone of urgency and direct influence that satisfies all the preconditions for the emergence of "*a new political space… that seeks out, stages and perceives an al-*

ternative set of responses"(12). Bojana Kunst believes that today these radical art projects *"use the same procedures as we ourselves do in our private or public activities; they succumb to the same bureaucratic laws and participatory problems. Nevertheless, their gesture can still be uncivil – they still somehow don't succumb to the strict contemporary demarcation of territories and to the division of labour… the critical potentiality of these kinds of projects can be grasped precisely through the connections and transgressions they establish, through their performative gestures: the political power of the project is revealed by the situation through which it establishes itself as project"*(13). At the same time, as Stephen Wilson claims, arts can function as an *"independent zone of research, where abandoned, discredited, and unorthodox inquires could be pursued"*(14), taking into account alternative criteria, and offers models for the future. *"Our culture desperately needs wide involvement in the definition of research agendas, the actual investigation processes, and in the exploration of the implications of what is discovered. Artists can contribute significantly to this discourse by developing a new kind of artist/researcher role."*(15) Positing the characteristic unique-

ness of the artistic experience against the repeatability of the scientific one, and understanding artistic research as a form of shared knowledge built on anti-universality and openness, Tere Vadén sees its contribution in *"calling into question and bringing forth of non-conceptual interpretations and skills in open and shared ways"*(16) and avoiding illustrations of existing conceptual knowledge, which is what scientific research traditionally does.

So how does one create a protest within such a rise of restrictions against freedom? Brian Holmes talks about creating a theatre or some other type of symbolic or real space for generating discussion and for performing it publicly and collectively. Recalling the term 'strategy of overidentification', which Slavoj Žižek used in the beginning of the 1990s to denote the essential political and aesthetical position of the NSK movement and their seeming ambivalence towards ideological and post-ideological questions, I could mention two recent examples of artistic activism that, in this rather pessimistic situation, offer us some optimistic views and motivation for further resistance. Echoes of the strategy of overidentification can be found in the confusion of identities

which The Yes Men use in their media activism, and also in the action of Inke Arns and Christian von Borries, where they proclaimed themselves Hermann Göring's grandchildren in late September 2004 in Berlin. In the pre-election situation in the US, The Yes Men have organised a tour across the States in which they perform propaganda as passionate Bush supporters, leaving behind an atmosphere of doubt, confusion and disbelief among the local inhabitants. A similar cultural intervention was realised in Germany by Inke Arns, a curator and theoretician, and Christian von Borries, an orchestra conductor. Angered by the insensible public support of the Friedrich Christian Flick Collection of contemporary art – Friedrich Christian being the grandson of Friedrich Flick, a war criminal and owner of an army factory in the Second World War – displayed in Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin and opened by the German ⎯chancellor Schröder, Arns and von Borries proclaimed themselves to be grandchildren of the notorious Nazi and gave away invitation cards to Göring's Collection before the opening of the F.C. Flick Collection(17). Their action was not aimed against the col-

lector himself, however, but targeted at the obvious attempt to avoid recent painful history with the excuse that art and politics must be separate in this particular case, whereas it is clear that the capital invested in the collection is of dirty lineage, and the whole situation unambiguously tries to cleanse the dark family history.

Bearing in mind the absurdity of the CAE trial, and despite the fact that we agree with Coco Fusco's comment, we must become fully aware of the appearance of a new chapter in art activism that will be marked by a general cultural fear and a threat to the freedom of expression, research and activism. The freedom of interdisciplinary collaboration and research, the validity of artistic research driven by subjective experimentation in the face of scientific research, and the possibility of collectively producing results for improving, raising awareness of and shifting the contemporary state-of-the-art – all these have been affected. As Claire Pentecost put it in her lecture about the Kurtz case: »*Steve and Robert have been punished because they were sharing information and knowledge and disregarding the militarised trends*"(18). +

(1) *The Electronic Disturbance*, 1994; *Electronic Civil Disobedience and Other Unpopular Ideas*, 1996; *Flesh Machine: Cyborgs, Designer Babies, and New Eugenic Consciousness*, 1998; *Digital Resistance: Explorations in Tactical Media*, 2001; *The Molecular Invasion*, 2002.
(2) Beatriz de Costa and Steve Kurtz (CAE). »Molecular Invasion and Another Projects". Kuda.org (ed.). *Bitomatik. Art practice in the time of Information/Media Domination*. Novi Sad: Kuda.org, 2003.
(3) *Ibid*.
(4) These biotechnological projects and the way they reveal the mechanisms mentioned above could be taken as an example of Giorgio Agamben's thesis on the bare life of a citizen, the *homo sacer*, in the grip of contemporary biopolitical power.
(5) Quotation taken from Brian Holmes in: Claire Pentecost and Brian Holmes. *Trials of the Public Amateur*. Lecture in Ljubljana, September 2004.
(6) CAE's supporters called this day 5/11, in reference to another tragedy with which further events, emerging from 5/11, are linked.
(7) Here is the Section 175 violation of which

Steve was suspected of:
Section 175. - Prohibitions with respect to biological weapons
(a) In General. -
Whoever knowingly develops, produces, stockpiles, transfers, acquires, retains, or possesses any biological agent, toxin, or delivery system for use as a weapon, or knowingly assists a foreign state or any organization to do so, or attempts, threatens, or conspires to do the same, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for life or any term of years, or both. There is extraterritorial Federal jurisdiction over an offense under this section committed by or against a national of the United States.
(b) Additional Offense. -
Whoever knowingly possesses any biological agent, toxin, or delivery system of a type or in a quantity that, under the circumstances, is not reasonably justified by a prophylactic, protective, bona fide research, or other peaceful purpose, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for not more than 10 years, or both. In this subsection, the terms ''biological agent'' and ''toxin'' do not encompass any biological agent or toxin that is in its naturally occurring environment, if

the biological agent or toxin has not been cultivated, collected, or otherwise extracted from its natural source.
(c) Definition. -
For purposes of this section, the term ''for use as a weapon'' includes the development, production, transfer, acquisition, retention, or possession of any biological agent, toxin, or delivery system for other than prophylactic, protective, bona fide research, or other peaceful purposes. See http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/ 18/175.html for the 1989 law and http:/ /www.ehrs.upenn.edu/protocols/patriot/ sec817.html for its USA Patriot Act expansion.
(8) Konrad Becker. *Freedom, Terror & Semiotic Democracy*. nettime, 19.6.2004. http:// www.nettime.org
(9) This quote is taken from the letter of the professors and staff from the University of California system, published at CAE Defense Fund, nettime, 8.7.2004. http://www.nettime.org
(10) Coco Fusco. *Tactical Outrage*. nettime, 3.6.2004. http://www.nettime.org
(11) Irit Rogoff. *We – Collectivities, Mutualities, Participations*. 2004. http://theater.kein.org/ node/view/95

(12) *Ibid*.
(13) Bojana Kunst. *Virtual Biopolitical Parliament. Davide Grassi's DemoKino*. 2004. http://www.aksioma.org/txt_dk.html
(14) Stephen Wilson. "Art as Research. The Cultural Importance of Scientific Research and Technology Development" (1996). Arie Altena (ed.). *Unsorted. Thoughts on the Information Arts*. Amsterdam: SonicActsX, 2004.
(15) *Ibid*.
(16) Tere Vadén. "Openness, Criticality and Language – Notes on the methodology of practice-based experiential research". Satu Kiljunen and Mika Hannula (ed.). *Artistic Research*. Helsinki: Academy of Fine Arts, 2002.
(17) The invitation cards to the Göring Collection carry the title *Hard Work Hard Play*, responding sarcastically to the capital and the means by which the F.C. Flick Collection has been acquired. Links to the Göring Collection project: www.carinhall-thecollection.de, www.v2.nl/~arns/Projects/Goering/Goering_ Collection.pdf
(18) Claire Pentecost and Brian Holmes, *Trials of the Public Amateur*, lecture at the Metelkova, Ljubljana, September 2004.

Exhibition and Project Reviews

Neus Miró

Manifesta 5: Review from Spain

Manifesta is unique in that it is a travelling biennial of contemporary art. This year it was held for the fifth time, hosted by the city of San Sebastián, known locally as Donostia, in the Basque Country on the northern coast of Spain.

Manifesta, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art was first held in 1996 and has laid particular emphasis on its European character ever since. It aims to explore the mental and geographical territory of Europe while seeking, as its overriding goal, to establish a dialogue between specifically cultural and artistic situations and the broader international context of art. The fact that it is a travelling exhibition makes it possible for Manifesta to offer an analysis of every area and/or region where it is held, while spreading like an expanding network.

Through events similar to Manifesta, such as other biennials or Documenta, we have grown accustomed to exhibitions or series of linked exhibitions that are structured around a central theme, an explicit, coetaneous historical motif that connects the works on display. Manifesta 5 took a different approach, opting instead for a number of syntagmata such as political rumour/cultural landscape/present imperfect/ruins in reverse/zones of contingency/underconstruction/spiritual noises and others, thereby eschewing tangible concepts. As a result, the theory behind the curatorial approach was from the outset seen by many as excessively ambiguous and

vague. Just one aspect closely linked to the idiosyncratic character of the place gave the exhibition an organisational, if not thematic, structure. The location of the works highlighted the dual identity that San Sebastián has had for many years: firstly, this city stands in a beautiful location and hence the tourism and service industries are important here; secondly, it has a geographical and economic counterpoint in Pasaia, barely 5 km away, where the industrial port area is located. A key fact that must be borne in mind is that San Sebastián is in the Basque Country and that it exemplifies the region's fight for independence from Spain, as well as its pride and conflict.

The curators for Manifesta 5, Marta Kuzma and Massimiliano Gioni, arranged the spaces according to criteria that were in many instances excessively vague in their organisational principles, as mentioned earlier. Nevertheless, some works stood out in remarkable fashion.

According to one of the press releases issued, works that considered the past and examined issues to do with national psyche and subjective identity through the blending of different elements were to be found in the Museo de San Telmo in San Sebastián. One of the impressive pieces here was Hito Steyerl's video entitled *November* (2004), which analyses and pays homage to the artist's friend Andrea Wolf, who was assassinated as a suspected Kurdish terrorist in 1998 in eastern Anatolia. The video skil-

fully combines documentary and fiction, and highlights the mechanisms whereby heroic figures and myths are constructed.

The work by Yevgeniy Yufit, however, is a more intimate analysis in which he reconstructs the life of a woman anthropologist following the traumatic death of her father. This work did not sit easily with the others on display in the Museo de San Telmo. Bas Jan Ader's film *I'm too sad to tell you* suffered similarly. Even though Ader's piece is an extraordinary work, the viewer ended up wondering what it had to do with the rest of the exhibits, as regards both its content and the fact that Ader is from a very different generation of artists.

The Kubo Kutxa Kursaal was another of the spaces in the centre of San Sebastián occupied by Manifesta 5. According to the press release, the works here were connected with architecture's implicit relationships with space and time. This was indeed the case with the video by Anu Pennanen entitled *Monument to the Invisible*, in which a blind girl uses her senses of touch and hearing to explore the city's new constructions and their beauty. The video manages to engage the viewer in an alternative way of exploring the city by emphasising the sounds, contrasts and numerous surfaces of new architecture, as well as the emotions that it can arouse.

Laura Horelli showed two videos in the Kubo, both documentaries that looked at two aspects of cruise ships. One of the videos follows the construction of the ships and the workers and designers making these floating cities at one of the shipyards in the city of Helsinki. The other video deals with the ship once it is afloat, showing us the workers, their lives and working conditions, as well as every detail of the running of the ship. The cruise ship is presented in Horelli's work as a unit, a microcosm, a faithful reproduction of a city, with its social and employment divisions, as well as its differentiated spatial distribution.

Another of the noteworthy works in the Kubo was the piece by Markus Schinwald, who exhibited a series of black-and-white slides projected one after the other in the format of a film, alternating images of architectural elements with others in which the protagonist is either a man or a woman. The soundtrack consists of the voice of a man reciting extracts from poems and love letters and the voice of a woman reading from what seems to be a script for a film. Schinwald's work manages to create a story in which the emotive is emphasised over and above the logical or rational.

Casa Ciriza is a former fish warehouse in the port area of Pasaia outside the tourist centre of San Sebastián. The various spaces in this building were employed as a venue for Manifesta 5, yet at the same time called to mind their original use, as they have not been restored. On display here was the work of D.A.E. (Donostiako Arte Ekinbideak), a cultural association founded by Peio Aguirre and Leire Vergara in San Sebastián, that describes itself as a cultural association with a flexible structure for realising artistic projects in Donostia.

D.A.E. was one of the few Spanish participants at Manifesta 5, a fact that aroused criticism as well as expectations amongst the Spanish artistic community. D.A.E. mounts its projects in San Sebastián and on this occasion put on its *Film ideal siempre* with the co-operation of Gorka Eizagirre and Xabier Salaberria and the generous support of Néstor Basterretxea. This project by the collective consisted of the reworking of a film made in the mid-1960s. In 1963, the businessman and patron, collector and founder of the X Films production company in Madrid Juan Huarte suggested to the Basque artists Néstor Basterretxea and Jorge Oteiza that they make a short film on the various companies he owned. In the end, Huarte opted for the script written by Basterretxea, who directed the film entitled

Operación H (the H comes from Huarte's surname). The revival of this film now reveals a creative moment typical of those years in the Basque Country and a particular creative tradition.

Also on display in Casa Ciriza was Iñaki Garmendia's video installation *Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger*, with images shot from backstage at a concert on the eve of May Day at a club in Kreuzberg, Berlin. The screens juxtaposed images of May Day celebrations with images of a Punk concert.

The piece shown by Kirsten Pieroth continues her personal investigation into the construction of narratives based on pre-existing objects as testimony. Pieroth's works question the notions of authenticity associated with certain objects. For Manifesta, Pieroth took as her starting point a brick originally produced by the Edison Portland Cement Company in New Village, New Jersey. She made copies of this original brick from 1904 and built a wall incorporating both the original and the copies manufactured in 2004. The wall is a real and physical entity as well as a fiction as regards function and authenticity.

As stated earlier, one of the aims of this Manifesta was to contribute to the discussion on the urban expansion taking place in cities, as well as on the increasingly marked differences between areas of service and tourism and zones given over to industry, as can be seen in San Sebastián. In the light of this, the curators decided to set up the Office of Alternative Urban Planning (TOOAUP) in September 2003 in conjunction with the Berlage Institute, the postgraduate laboratory of architecture and urban research based in Rotterdam, directed by the architect Alejandro Zaera Polo. As a laboratory of ideas, the TOOAUP generated various possibilities for action in Pasaia, the industrial area of San Sebastián, the starting point for which was the dialogue that ought to be established between the various interest groups in the area. The results of this research were recorded in the Manifesta catalogue and could be accessed via an interactive computer terminal in Casa Ciriza. Though this initiative was undoubtedly one of the most interesting to feature in Manifesta, its presentation lacked the resources that would have helped the viewer to better understand its meaning. For those unfamiliar with the area, the maps and diagrams were meaningless and could only be understood as possible plans affecting a nearby area.

Jan de Cock mounted another project in situ in Ondartxo, an abandoned shipbuilding warehouse. De Cock transformed the whole of the warehouse and workshop into a semi-permanent installation consisting of a labyrinthine construction within a construction that could only be viewed from outside as it was impossible to access in its entirety.

Manifesta 5 left one with the abiding impression at the end of the visit that it was a confused and overly vague exhibition that had a line of action related to the place, and lots of lines running off at a tangent that were completely fortuitous and unnecessary. +

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Leevi Haapala

Kim Simonsson: Dystopia – Porcelain Dogs as Guardians of a Pathological Fantasy

One fundamental idea or force for the future in contemporary art is the continual synthesis of different cultural practices and their modes of visual manifestation. Contemporary art can be said to both suck up and digest things that are only just taking shape in the surrounding visual world. In this sense, at best, the contemporary avant-garde is making comprehensible a world that is rapidly changing around us, along with the way it manifests to us visually, or at least it is pinning it down as a focus of critical attention. This also happens in reverse: contemporary art is opening its doors and lowering the threshold to the advance of new ways of seeing. And, at the same time, to visions of the future.

In Kim Simonsson's works two major registers of seeing intersect with the material dimension of art making: seeing as a process of gestalt formation and of conformity to physiological rules; and seeing as a social, historical and cultural reality. These two registers emerge in a variety of ways in the works' starting points and in the atmospheres they evoke. Simonsson has succeeded in combining glass and ceramic-art techniques into the fantasy figures he has developed, which draw equally from Japanese manga comics and the synthetic form language of design. To my mind, the delicacy of Simonsson's works extends beyond the surface effects of visual culture. The fantasy figures do not just wander around the terrain of the imagination, but come to a halt to ask about social values and about who will have to live with the decisions made now?

The Return of the Porcelain Dog
On seeing Simonsson's works, we find ourselves wondering why so little ceramics or glass is used in contemporary art? The answer is obvious: it requires special training, which is rarely offered by traditional art schools. Simonsson trained in Helsinki in the ceramics and glass department at the University of Art and Design, with contemporary art's questionings in mind. Working for a while within a different tradition teaches us to articulate our own visions. He knew the prejudices that were felt about ceramics, as being old ladies painting porcelain as a hobby. Fortunately another hothead was studying in the same year group, Hans-Christian Berg, who is nowa-

days also making use of his knowledge of glass in his conceptual artworks as a sculptor.

Simonsson says he has seen good contemporary artists, such as the Brits Tony Cragg and Richard Deacon, who make use of traditional craftsmanship and especially ceramics in their works. Several others employ craftsmanship provided by outside workers, partly in the ready-made spirit, for instance, Jeff Koons with his kitsch figures or Wim Delvoye with his enamelled engravings. A closer parallel to Simonsson's own vision of combining art with other forms of visual culture can be found, via their form language and their finishing that verges on perfection, in Takashi Murakami

and his factory's comic-book sculpted figures. Simonsson's interest was initially aroused by Murakami's wanking cowboy and the girl who jumps a rope made of a stream of milk coming from her nipples.

When setting about designing his *Überhund* series, he immediately got to grips with the most obvious theme, i.e. he decided to remodel the idea of the porcelain dog, of that English charmer of the Victorian era. Simonsson, himself a dog lover, had a explicit knowledge of the subject and, at the same time, the idea occurred of creating his own breed of dog. In his figures Simonsson decided to overturn the image of dogs' strokeable good-naturedness. Black or white dogs appear in the sculptures as alert and aggressive, and also as skinned carcasses and as prostrate sacks lying emptied out. Here the *Überhund* dogs have an affinity with the creature in Arthur Conan Doyle's tale of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, a beast that howls on the moors.

In its external appearance the Überhund resembles a trained greyhound. The title of the series is a reference to Nietzsche's idea of the superman, the *Übermensch*, of a more developed, self-made human being, in whom the various emotional capacities are concentrated to an extreme. According to Simonsson, the figure integrates the split mind of the main character in Bret Easton Ellis' *American Psycho*. Working out at the gym is seen as an aspiration to a perfection of external appearance and status. Behind that perfection are concealed fantasies of sadistic torture and the venting of a sick mind on others. This schizophrenia has been trans-

posed to the animal kingdom in the guise of superdogs. They have been developed to an extreme to be aggressive machines, and thus the metamorphosis of the good-natured porcelain doggies is complete.
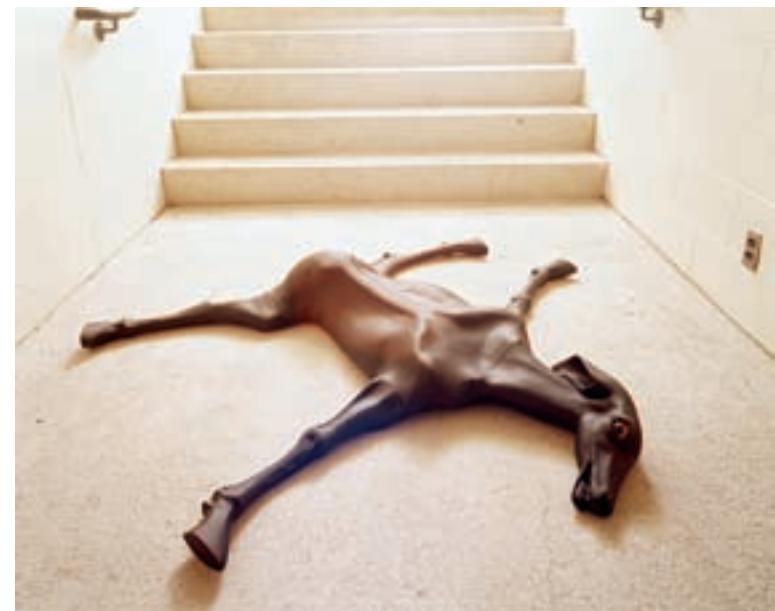
Manga Meets Ceramics

Tampere Art Museum chose Simonsson as its Young Artist of the Year 2004. This gave him an opportunity to show his new set of works. He did an artist's residency in Canada, where it was possible to work on ceramics. *Watching You, Watching Me*, 2000, a piece in which ten large-scale dolls' heads stare at the viewer from the floor with their glass eyes, can be seen as a foretaste of the new works on child themes. Simonsson says he started from an interest in making eyes out of glass, which as a material brings an aliveness with it through its ability to refract light. The aim was not so much to achieve a physiological likeness as to give the impression of a finished work. The glass eyes serve as kinds of filters for fantasies. As the title of the work indicates, it appears as though the heads follow the viewer across the room. This creates a creepy feeling, with the inanimate heads displaying signs of life. The sculpture installation makes us aware of the two-edged nature of directing the gaze.

In Simonsson's sculptures the cultural circulation of the modern comic strip becomes a complete hybrid. Where their comic-strip-likeness refers to the figures in Japanese manga comic books, we can but remember that the Japanese modern comic strip has been influenced by both Disney and, for instance, Chinese woodcuts.

In the same way, the Asian tradition is also represented by the porcelain dogs, before their arrival in English ceramics factories. Simonsson says he is interested in manga figures and in what they look like, while the stories in themselves are of no relevance. Animals, crime scenes, and superheroes and creatures from outer space are familiar images from manga. What he sees as more important in his works is their figurativeness, which is present in more broadly contemporary culture – not solely in comic strips, but equally in fashion design and advertising.

One thing that attracts our attention in Simonsson's works is the organic, seamless figures that wander around as empty shapes. He wants to leave in these figures an assumption of an inner life beneath the surface. He creates this strange glimmer of life, for example, specifically with the glass eyes or with his own trademark – a red hand-painted ring – around the eyes. This creates a breach in the white, polished ceramic surface and serves as an invivifying gesture against the otherwise carefully made surfaces. Simonsson relates the attention value of red to Peter Greenaway's film *The Baby of Mâcon*, in which the mouth of the miracle-working baby was painted an unusual red. When used around the eye sockets, the effect shifts from flirting to shudder-making. The white figures are good projection surfaces for various identities.

Children in the
Theatre of Cultural Trauma

The cuteness drips from Simonsson's child images right from the first glance. What they share with man-

ga comics is that they have not been made solely for children or adults, but rather the way they are presented makes them a topic for general discussion. The skilfulness and enchantment of the sculptures is replaced by grave faces and the cynicism of contemporary reality. Looking at them, we are reminded of the vision presented by William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, also of the cruelty of children. While this might be about a settling of differences between children, the worst thing is that Simonsson's figures appear to be reacting to an actual problem, i.e. to adult violence towards children, which the children appear to repeat. Simonsson shows us a menacing image of the future, to which we cannot close our eyes.

The researcher in American contemporary culture Mark Seltzer describes our time as a kind of public pathological sphere. His objective is to explain the category of cultural trauma, which he investigates with an assumption of the merging of the private and public registers. Seltzer stresses the unification of public violence and eroticism into erotic violence, which is manifested specifically in individual-level fantasies and in the place they are publicly enacted. He calls this the pathological public sphere. Perhaps the best example of this is the kidnapping and abuse of the Belgian girls, and the public mode of presentation both in the media and in the form taken by citizens' own expressions of grief. With his sculptural figures Simonsson plays with representations of evil. In the gestures and facial expressions of the child figures there is something that has both suffered and

that is empty, at the same time. The reference relations between different realities become mixed together.

Chainsaw Murderer, 2003, appears to refer to the splatter -horror classic. Simonsson's works elude the most obvious interpretations. According to him this is about how it is now children's time to strike back in self-defence. Simonsson tells of an event that actually happened to a nine-year-old girl who was subjected to violence. The boy who plays the chainsaw killer in the work embodies this resistance. At the same time, the masked boy becomes an image of the responsibility that children have to take. Children themselves have to protect themselves against the evil from which adults seem unable to defend them. The pessimism evinced by the figures helps us see contemporary reality in another way. It demands actions so that this aspect of trauma culture does not established itself as a prevailing reality. +

The writer is an art historian based in Helsinki.
Translated by Tomi Snellman.

Hanna Johansson

Tactics of an Unknown City

Art these days has very little to do with craftsmanship or commitment to a single medium. Because art increasingly takes the shape of transitory situations, social processes or tactics, art academies must once again be prepared to change. Plaster casts, charcoal drawings, life studies, easels and the smell of turpentine have long since been accompanied by electronic technologies and devices. But the buzzword in today's art education is no longer new media, which are increasingly used as mere instruments for the realisation of the new buzzword, networking. Correspondingly, the task for art education is to launch new strategies and stretch the framework of art through the use of political or social interventions.

At the turn of the year, the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki moved to new premises. For the past twenty years or so, the school had been scattered all over the greater Helsinki region. The main school has operated on Bulevardi next to the historical Ruttopuisto, or "plague park". With the move to new premises, the Academy has rationalised itself, as it were. In Elanto's old bread factory on the north side of the Pitkäsilta bridge, the school now has all its departments under one roof.

The move away from the centre also marks a transition to a 'new era'. Refurbished for the Academy, the new facilities also provide for new practices in art, as well as modern demands for presentation and production. But the move of the Academy to Kallio, a traditional worker's district that has today developed into a culturally layered and ethnically heterogeneous residential area, also points to the Academy's new need to 'open up' towards its social as well as physical surroundings, and to react to the challenges of a changing culture.

As if on cue, the Academy's Department of Media Studies launched a new study programme called *The Unknown City.* In the introductory text, the programme leaders, Bo Karsten and Erkki Soininen, write about the background of the project: "Art is always engaged in a dialogue with its environment, firmly linked with the contemporary social and cultural context as well as networks, extending also outside the traditional field of art. From this perspective, art is not just finished objects of art or projects, it is also a search for new methods, networking

and perception: it is a process whose chief elements are context, site, situation, presentation, interpretation and audience."

The aim of the new curriculum is to establish an active, living workshop that would enable long-term community art projects. The idea is to shift the focus of art education from the making of objects towards social interaction. Students are guided to work within the community of a designated area and to see their own activities in the context of the political and cultural changes in society at large.

The move to Sörnäisten rantatie in the dynamic urban district of Kallio actually provided the substratum for the new programme, with *The Unknown City* choosing its own environment as its theme. The goal is for students to learn to know Kallio and to select a target in the area, a house or a community, where to conduct their own 'field studies'. The project operates under the wings of the Department of Media Studies in a designated Space X, which is, according to Karsten, a kind of centre, heart, brain or battery of the project.

Space X is used to conduct workshops in, but it is hoped that it will also stimulate students to experiment and to study contemporary culture and art education. The purpose is to search for new forms of art making, and thereby to discover new, wider audiences for contemporary art.

The Unknown City and Space X follow quite closely the concept of *proto academy* launched by Charles Esche. Esche's academy is a reaction to the challenges of the new extended field of contemporary art, with a view to putting existing social structures to the test instead of just learning the traditional skills of the heritage of art academies. Esche describes his proto academy as a parasite on the traditional art academy, a semi-open space that gathers together students from art, architecture, as well as design, to work under the terms of new multicultural locality.

Esche likens his proto academy to a laboratory or an experimental space that allows things to be done differently. The academy-as-laboratory seeks to produce new, critical forms of discussion, knowledge and action. Esche compares the proto academy with the ancient 'first academy', which was meant as a training ground for citizens. In this, he emphasises the classic definition of 'citizens', who in the fully realised state are a persistent annoyance to political power. Plato's Akademeia, the school of philosophy on the north side of Athens in the fourth century BC, is the origin of the European concept of academy and all academies for the liberal arts.

The idea of a proto academy, whether Esche's academy or *The Unknown City* in Helsinki, stems from the present crisis in art education, where art education is required to come up with new ways to respond to contemporary challenges.

This in itself does not make the new academy-laboratories into something unprecedented in history. The objectives of academies and the means for their realisation have undergone countless crises during the history of modern art academies that properly got under way in the Renaissance. The status of academies gains its strength precisely from their ability to function in a crisis and be transformed as a consequence. In that sense, the name 'academy' already carries a certain, very particular cultural status. "An academy is not a school, nor is it a university. It is an institution dedicated to research or the maintenance of some artistic medium," writes Frances Yates, adding that it is a thoroughly European institution and has played an important role in the development of the European spirit.

The Unknown City is merely a parasite within the Academy of Fine Arts. However, the current Academy is an institute of higher education and as such comparable to a university – which is not the same as an academy... Be that as it may, the founders

of *The Unknown City* wanted it to promote both research and art, perhaps in keeping with the spirit of academia.

Apart from the academia of antiquity, Esche's proto academy is also modelled after certain European and American art schools which reacted to shifts in ideas about art in the early decades of the 20th century and developed new forms of art production and art making. Models Esche had in mind included UNOVIS and GINKHUK, Bauhaus, Beuys' Free International University, CalArts and Goldsmiths. Esche stresses the fact that all these schools arose from within a group of like-minded individuals. However, the 'great moments' of these art schools – many of which remain important to this day – only lasted a few years, before they too needed external challenges and renewal.

Perhaps for this very reason *The Unknown City* is envisaged precisely as an experiment. Currently it is barely discernible – if perceptible at all – what will happen in the future, how Space X will work in reality. Perhaps one should not expect process-based art education to yield quick or visible results, because, instead of the visible, an art of intervention, listening and discussion searches for the invisible, and manifests itself primarily as a *tactic*.

Of course, idealistic plans like this inevitably give rise to a host of questions. On a general level, they involve issues of community art, which produces services or aims at social or political change. In the case of *The Unknown City*, however, the problem is whether a 'community' art project that is steered from above can be realised on the level of practical stud-

ies, notwithstanding the fact that the project seeks to overturn, in line with Esche's proto academy, both specialisation as isolation and the hierarchy between students and teachers.

The active 'moment of greatness' of art academies, mentioned above, has generally lasted for only a short time. Such a period always arises from within the school, specifically its students, even though it may have come about through the active assistance of teachers. As this particular 'proto academy' aims from the outset to be an idealistic, active and change-seeking workshop, how can the ideals become reality – or are they supposed to

become a reality at all? Perhaps instruction aims at preparing students for a future which looks even more problematic, at least if local inhabitants are used as material for the process.

Community art functions best when it springs from the artist's own commitment to his or her community or region, locally, emerging from within the community or district or problem itself. But what happens if the process is steered from above, governed by the requirements of a degree programme or study plan? What is the meaning of commitment to elderly people in Kallio, when that com-

mitment is inscribed in a study programme? Or when the instructions include the provision that the work must be carried out in a specific area – Kallio in this case – with which the young person has perhaps never had any sort of relationship? In other words, can commitment be taught, and can the object of such commitment be determined in advance? Or, to put it in another way, can we decide to do something revolutionary tomorrow or next week? +

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Artists November 2004 - June 2005

Artur Zmijewski, Pol
Stephan Kurr, Ger
Roger Hill, UK, Live Art Fellowship,
Arts Council England

City Breaks -project, UK/FIN

Carlos Bunga, Pol
Chris Gordon, Ru, curator, in collaboration
with FRAME
Alexander Nikolic, Aus/Serbia

Jay Koh, Singapore/Myanmar
Ange Taggart, UK, Live Art Fellowship,
Arts Council England
Alice Miceli, Brazil
Antonio Scarponi, Italy

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An audio-visual, research based essay on institutional spaces

Spaces of conflict
Mike Bode & Staffan Schmidt

Realized in collaboration with

Statens Museum for Kunst/the x-room and the
Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen (DK)
Kunsthalle Helsinki and Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki (FI)
Kunst-Werke and Berlin University of the Arts, Berlin (DE)
Contemporary Art Centre and Vilnius Art Academy, Vilnius (LT)
National Museum for Contemporary Art and the
National Academy of Fine Art, Oslo (NO)
Rooseum and Malmö Art Academy, Malmö (SE)

The project will first be presented at
Kunsthalle Helsinki, Helsinki, 3 November 2004
(Screening and panel discussion)
Kunst-Werke, Berlin, 27 November 2004 – 9 January 2005
Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius, January – February 2005

The project is produced by NIFCA
Curated by Nina Montmann

nifca

Finnish Artists Abroad

This calendar lists exhibitions abroad by Finnish artists during Fall 2004 – Spring 2005. Please let us know about exhibitions planned for 2005, which may be listed in the next Framework Calendar.

Calendar Fall '04 – Spring '05

Argentina

Heavy Snowflakes, Miklos Gaál, Jari Haanperä, Tellervo Kalleinen, Anu Pennanen, Mika Taanila. Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires - MAMbA, Buenos Aires, 25.11.2004-30.12.2004, www.aamamba.org.ar

Australia

Biennale of Electronic Arts Perth BEAP04/ Sonic Difference, Simo Alitalo. The Moores Building Contemporary Art Gallery, 9.9.-10.10.2004, www.beap.org

Beyond the Horizon, Markku Hakuri, School of Art and Culture, RMIT University, Melbourne, 6.10.-23.10.2004, www.rmit.edu.au, www.uiah.fi

Jari Silomäki, Gallery Esa Jaske/Project Space, Sydney, 3.11.-27.11.2004

New Trends of Architecture in Europe and Asia-Pacific 2004-05, Kivi Sotamaa and Tuuli Sotamaa, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne, 9.8.-17.9.2005

Austria

Laura Horelli, Galerie Im Taxispalais, Innsbruck, 26.6.-15.8.2004, www.galerieimtaxispalais.at

Para Sites, Tea Mäkipää, MUMOK Factory, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Wien, 15.10.-7.11.2004, www.mumok.at

Pia Lindman, Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna, 1.11.-11.12.2004, www.kunsthalle.wuk.at

Belgium

Anu Tuominen, Atelier 340 Muzeum, Brussels, 22.10.2004-30.1.2005, www.atelier340muzeum.be

Models and (e)motion, Miklos Gaál, Hanse-Office, Brussels, 15.11.-3.12.2004

Locus Loppem, Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Marja Pirilä, Charles Sandison, Kimmo Pohjonen and Petri Nuutinen, Kunsthalle Lophem, Loppem Zedelgem, 15.1.-14.5.2005

Charles Sandison, Galerie Baronia Francey, Brussels, March-April 2005, www.baronianfrancey.com

Self-Portraits, Finnish Photography: an actual overview 1994-2004, Elina Brotherus, Jaakko Heikkilä, Martti Jämsä, Jan Kaila, Aino Kannisto, Janne Lehtinen, Jouko Lehtola, Ville Lenkkeri, Anni Leppälä, Esko Männikkö, Jyrki Parantainen, Marja Pirilä, Riitta Päiväläinen, Ari Saarto and Pekka Turunen, The Museum of Photography of the Province of Antwerp, Belgium, April-May 2005

Kaisu Koivisto, Atelier 340 Muzeum, Brussels, 15.6.-15.9.2005, www.atelier340muzeum.be

Brazil

Doubting Thomas, Jukka Korkeila, XXVI Biennale of São Paulo, 25.9.-19.12.2004, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, www.bienalsaopaulo.org.br

Belorussia

Navinki2004, 6th International Performance Festival, Roi Vaara, Museum of Contemporary Arts, Minsk, 4.9.-6.9.2004

The House of Mind and Memories, Marjo Levlin, Museum of Contemporary Visual Arts, Minsk, 7.9.-29.9.2004

Canada

Le 6e mois de la performance, Essi Kausalainen and Marja Mikkonen, 6.10.-31.10.2004, Montreal, www.lacentrale.org

*7a*11d International Festival of Performance Art*, Helinä Hukkataival, Toronto, 20.10.-31.10.2004, www.7a-11d.ca

Jaakko Niemelä and Minna Långström, Gallery Inter Access, Toronto, 3.11.-17.12.2004

Katarina Ryöppy, Action Art Actuel, Quebec, 24.2.-27.3.2005

Gun Holmström, Gallery Articule, Montreal, 23.4-30.4.2005

Gun Holmström, Gallery Optica, Montreal, 22.4.-28.5.2005

Czech Republic

Jaakko Heikkilä, Pekka Turunen, Veli Granö, Marja Pirilä, Sanni Seppo, Kati Koivikko and Päivi Eronen, Prague House of Photography, Prague, 3.11.2004-2.1.2005, www.php-gallery.cz

Jari Arffman, Gallery Nordica, Prague, 1.2.-30.3.2005, www.scandinavianhouse.cz

Denmark

Seppo Renvall, Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, 4.9.-26.9.2004, www.charlottenborg-art.dk

Tiina Itkonen, North Atlantic House Bryggen, Copenhagen, 16.9.-31.10.2004, www.bryggen.dk

I Need No Map, Anu Pennanen, Overgaden Institute for Contemporary Art, Copenhagen, 17.9.-17.10.2004, www.overgaden.org

Kaisa Soini, Nordisk Ministerråds Galleri, Copenhagen, 4.12.-7.1.2005

Get Real!, Juha Huuskonen, Museum of Contemporary Art, Roskilde, 15.4.-12.6.2005

The Shadow, Hanna Haaslahti, Vestsjaellands Kunstmuseum, Sorø, 28.5.-4.9.2005

Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, 25.8.2005-2.1.2006

Estonia

Christine Candolin, Tartu Kunstimuuseum, Tartu, 19.11.-31.1.2005, www.tartmus.ee

France

Vague II Hommages et Disgressions, Elina Brotherus, Musée Malraux, Le Havre, 26.6.-27.9.2004, www.ville-lehavre.fr

Aino Kannisto, Centro Cultural Cajastur, Gijón, 10.8.-17.10.2004, www.cajastur.es

Hasan Fuat Sari, Elne Ville d'Arts Galerie La Pardelera, Elne, 1.9.-30.9.2004

Zone de Confluences, Charles Sandison, Grande Halle de La Villette, Paris, 21.9.-3.10.2004, www.villette-numerique.com

New Trends of Architecture in Europe and Asia-Pacific 2004-05, Kivi Sotamaa and Tuuli Sotamaa, La maison Folie de Lille - Moulins La Brasserie des 3 Moulins, Lille, 9.10.-7.11.2004

Pia Lindman, FIAC International Art Fair/Luxe Gallery, Paris Expo, Porte de Versailles, Paris, 21.10.-25.10.2004, www.fiac.reed-oip.fr

Heli Hiltunen, Galerie Birthe Laursen, Paris, 21.10.-4.12.2004, www.birthelaursen.com

Nanna Hänninen, Paris Photo/Galerie Ulrich Fiedler and Gallery Taik, Paris, 11.11.-14.11.2004

Tiina Itkonen and Jaakko Heikkilä, Musée de Normandie, Caen, 20.11.-31.12.2004, www.crl.basse-normandie.com/03-boreales/0-boreales.html

Finnish View-Fragments of Our Time, Jouko Lehtola, Pôle Image Haute-Normandie, Rouen, 17.2-30.3.2005

Elina Brotherus, &: gb agency, Paris, 12.3.-21.4.2005

Elina Brotherus, FRAC Haute-Normandie, Rouen, 25.3.-15.5.2005

Veli Granö, Gallery of the Finnish Institute, Paris, March 2005, www.institut-finlandais.asso.fr

Germany

Jorma Puranen, Galerie Blickensdorff, Berlin, 27.8.-9.10.2004, www.blickensdorff.com
Shrinking Cities, Laura Horelli in collaboration with Kathrin Wildner, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, 5.9.-7.11.2004, www.kw-berlin.de, www.shrinkingcities.com

Laura Horelli, Kunstfabrik am Flutgraben, Berlin, 10.9.-8.10.2004

Jaakko Heikkilä, Museum Europäischer Kulturen, Berlin, 10.9.-14.11.2004, www.verein-museum-europaeischer-kulturen.de

Ola Kolehmainen, Bielefelder Kunstverein, Museum Waldhof, Bielefeld, 11.9.-7.11.2004, www.bielefelder-kunstverein.de

Riiko Sakkinen, Galerie Luecke and Partner, 16.9.-26.9.2004, www.lueckeundpartner.de

Laura Horelli, Artforum Berlin/Gallery Barbara Weiss, Berlin, 18.9.-22.9.2004, www.galeriebarbaraweiss.de

Nanna Hänninen, Artforum Berlin/Galleri Bo Bjerggaard, Berlin, 18.9.-22.9.2004

Miklos Gaál, Ilkka Halso, Tiina Itkonen, Sandra Kantanen, Ola Kolehmainen, Janne Lehtinen, Ville Lenkkeri, Niko Luoma, Juha Nenonen, Jyrki Parantainen, Jorma Puranen, Jari Silomäki and Santeri Tuori, Artforum Berlin/Gallery Anhava and Gallery Taik, Berlin, 18.9.-22.9.2004

Staged Photographs, Aino Kannisto, Kunstverein Münsterland, Coesfeld, 26.9.-13.11.2004, www.Kunstverein-Muensterland.de

Believe it or not, Miklos Gaál, Bethanien, Kunstamt Kreuzberg, Berlin, 15.10.-30.11.2004

Art Cologne, Hans-Christian Berg and Susanne Gottberg, Köln, 28.10.-1.11.2004, www.artcologne.de

Charles Sandison, Art Cologne/Ulrich Fiedler Contemporary, Köln, 28.10.-1.11.2004, www.artcologne.de

Nanna Hänninen, Art Cologne/Galleri Bo Bjerggaard and Galerie Ulrich Fiedler, Köln, 28.10.-1.11.2004, www.artcologne.de

Frida Hultcrantz, Olli Keränen, Antti Laitinen, Maija Luutonen, Antti Oikarinen and Ilona Valkonen, Koch und Kesslau Gallery, Berlin, 29.10.-27.11.2004, www.kochundkesslau.de

Habitat, Charles Sandison, Galerie Arndt & Partner, Berlin, 30.10.-4.12.2004, www.arndt-partner.de

Nordic Art, Elina Brotherus and Stiina Saaristo, MKM Museum Küppersmühle, Duisburg, 5.11.-12.12.2004, www.museum-kueppersmuehle.de

Santeri Tuori, Galerie sphn, Berlin, 5.11.-24.12.2004

Erika Adamsson and Jani Rättyä, Kunstraum Malerhof Voigtholz, Peine, 7.11.-28.11.2004, www.a-wolters.de

Ilkka Halso, Quicksilver Galerie, Berlin, 11.11.2004-15.1.2005

11th Congress for Performance Art, Katri Kainulainen on 7.11.2004, Hannu Elenius, Linda Granfors, Matti Hikipää, Lauri Luhta, Pessi Parviainen, Ari Taskinen, Tiina Tietäväinen, Marja Mikkonen and Pilvari Pirtola on 15.11.-18.11.2004, Gallery SoToDo, Berlin, www.sotodo.org

Marja Hakala, Galerie im Haus der Kurseelsorge, Bad Krozingen, 16.1.-20.2.2005

Munch Revisited - Edvard Munch and The Art of Today, Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Kunsthalle Dortmund, Dortmund, 30.1.-1.5.2005

Der Kunstpreis der Böttcherstrasse 2005, Laura Horelli, Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen, 13.2.-3.4.2005

Tiina Itkonen, Synart Art Gallery, Frankfurt, 2.3.-9.4.2005, www.synart-artgallery.de

Die vierte Generation, Susanna Kekkonen, Noomi Ljungdell, Tuomo Rainio, Milja Laurila, Ari Kakkinen, Wilma Hurskainen, Ea Vasko, Maria Lähteenmäki, Jari Silomäki and Ville Lenkkeri, PPS Medienbunker, Hamburg, 19.5.-19.6.2005

Elina Brotherus, Galerie Wilma Tolksdorff, Fankfurt am Main, May 2005

Zwischen Traum und Wirklichkeit, Ville Lenkkeri, Janne Lehtinen, Aino Kannisto and Henrik Duncker, Stadtmuseum Ratingen, Ratingen, 10.8.-31.8.2005

The Helsinki School, Stefan Bremer, Elina Brotherus, Joakim Eskildsen, Miklos Gaál, Veli Granö, Nanna Hänninen, Ilkka Halso, Maarit Hohteri, Tiina Itkonen, Ulla Jokisalo, Aino Kannisto, Sanna Kannisto, Sandra Kantanen, Pertti Kekarainen, Timo Kelaranta, Marjaana Kella, Ola Kolehmainen, Andrei Lajunen, Janne Lehtinen, Jouko Lehtola, Ville Lenkkeri, Niko Luoma, Juha Nenonen, Riitta Päiväläinen, Jyrki Parantainen, Jorma Puranen, Heli Rekula, Ari Saarto, Magnus Scharmanoff, Jari Silomäki, Santeri Tuori, Pekka Turunen and Marjukka Vainio, Berlin, 5.9-15.11 2005

Charles Sandison, Galerie Arndt & Partner, Berlin, September-November 2005, www.arndt-partner.de

Greece

Charles Sandison, Galerie Jean Bernier, Athens, February-March 2005, www.bernier-eliades.gr

Hong Kong

New Trends of Architecture in Europe and Asia-Pacific 2004-05, Kivi Sotamaa and Tuuli Sotamaa, Hong Kong Central Library, Exhibition Galleries, Hong Kong, 5.1.-19.1.2005

Hungary

Elina Brotherus, Maimano, Hungarian Photography Center, Budapest, 13.9.-7.10.2004

Cinemascope, Tommi Grönlund & Petteri Nisunen, Átrium cinema building, Budapest, 15.10.-24.10.2004

The Telematic Society: Art in the 'fourth dimension', Roi Vaara, Artpool P60/Artpool Art Research Center, Budapest, 29.10.-12.11.2004

Iceland

Juha van Ingen, Galleri Slunkariki, Isafjördur, 12.2.-27.2.2005

Ireland

Éigse Carlow Arts Festival, Charles Sandison, Carlow, June 2005, www.eigsecarlow.com

Italy

Finlanded, Marie Brask, Juha Hälikkä, Petra Innanen, Hannu Palosuo and Nanna Susi, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea Ciampino, Ciampino, 6.6.-4.7.2004, www.comune.ciampino.roma.it

Morphing Lights, Floating Shadows, Nanna Hänninen, METAMORPH 9th International Architecture Exhibition, Corderie, Venice, 12.9.-7.11.2004

04 Videorassegna, Sampsa Virkajärvi, Leonardi V-Idea, Genova, 23.10.-28.10.2004, www.leonardi.rules.it

Charles Sandison, Arte Fiera/The Lisson Gallery, Bologna, 27.1.-31.1.2005, www.artefiera.bolognafiere.it

Japan

The Encounters in the 21st Century, Kivi Sotamaa &Tuuli Sotamaa, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, 9.10.2004-10.4.2005, www.art.city.kanazawa.ishikawa.jp

Both Sides, Eija Isojärvi,Tatsuo Hoshika, Ritva Kovalainen, Sanni Seppo, Reiko Nireki, Hiroshi Mikami and Kirsi Tiittanen, C.A.P House, Kobe, 12.11-12.12.2004, www.cap-kobe.com

Ror Forever, ROR, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, March 2005, www.mori.art.museum

Tea Mäkipää, The World Exposition, Aichi, 25.3.-25.9.2005,www.expo2005artprogram.com

The World Is A Stage: Stories Behind Pictures, Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, 26.3.-19.6.2005, www.mori.art.museum

New Trends of Architecture in Europe and Asia-Pacific 2004-05, Kivi Sotamaa and Tuuli Sotamaa, Hillside Terrace, Tokyo, 22.4.-22.5.2005

Lithuania

The X International Nida, Inari Virmakoski, Katariina Salmijärvi and Heli Änkö, Curonian Spit, 10.9.-25.9.2004

Nordic Image, Ismo Hölttä, Henrik Duncker, Jukka Male and Säde Kahra, Photo Days, Kaunas, 14.9.-10.10.2004

Luxembourg

Search for Mastery, Ola Kolehmainen, Galerie Nei Liicht, Dudelange, 14.1.-20.2.2005, www.galeries-dudelange.lu

Mosambik

The Eyes of a Woman, PHOTOFesta 2004, Elina Brotherus, Päivi Eronen, Sanna Kannisto, Ritva Kovalainen, Raakel Kuukka, Marja Pirilä and Ritva Tuomi, Ginásio de Maputo, Maputo, 18.10.-18.11.2004

Netherlands

Anu Pennanen, Galerie Fons Welters, Playstation, Amsterdam, 4.9.-6.10.2004, www.fonswelters.nl

4D in the Filmmuseum - The fascination of artists for images of science and technology, Mika Taanila, Amsterdam Filmmuseum,10.9.-27.10.2004

Fotowerken, Juha Nenonen, MKgalerie.nl, Rotterdam 7.10-14.11.2004, www.mkgalerie.nl

Heli Rekula, Part I LAT/Living, Odapark, Venray, 5.11.2004-23.1.2005, www.odapark.com

New Zealand

Gridlock: Cities, Structures, Spaces, OLO, Jaakko Niemelä and Anu Pennanen, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, 21.8.-17.10.2004, www.govettbrewster.com

Norway

Biennale Syd 2004 - intimitetstyranniet?, Anu Pennanen, Tellervo Kalleinen and Juha Laatikainen, Sørlandet Art Museum, Kristiansand, 28.8.-21.11.2004, www.skmu.no

Site Under Construction, Maija Hirvanen and Leena Kela, Tou Scene, Stavanger, 15.9.-16.9.2004

Down here, Salla Tykkä, Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen, 8.10.-18.11.2005, www.kunsthall.no

Brotherus, Girl, Elina Brotherus, Finnish-Norvegian Cultural Institute, Oslo, May 2005

Kaisa Soini, Finsk-norsk Kultur-institutt, Oslo, 14.10.-20.11.2004

Roi Vaara, Nordic-Baltic Festival, National Museum of Art, Oslo, May-June 2005

Kaisu Koivisto, Galleri Innsikt, Isfjorden, 11.7.-31.7.2005

Peru

Heavy Snowflakes, Miklos Gaál, Jari Haanperä, Tellervo Kalleinen, Anu Pennanen and Mika

Taanila, Museo de Arte de Lima, Lima, Peru 12.1.-27.2.2005, http://museoarte.perucultural.org.pe

Poland

Minna Suoniemi, Gallery Okna, Ujazdowski Center for Contempory Art, Warzaw, 10.1.-17.1.2005

Susanne Gottberg, Radoslav Gryta, Tero Laaksonen, Kuutti Lavonen, Henrietta Lehtonen, Catarina Ryöppy and Risto Suomi, Galeria Arsenal, Poznán, 5.9.-25.9.2005

Portugal

On the Road - Finnish Contemporary Art, Björn Aho, Tiina Heiska, Jari Jula, Antero Kahila, Pekka Muinonen, Liisa Pesonen, Maiju Salmenkivi, Alli Savolainen, Vaula Siiskonen, Stig Baumgartner, Pirjetta Brander, Ylva Holländer, Paula Holopainen, Mika Hytti, Heli Mäki-Arvela, Reima Nurmikko, Henni Oksman, Tarja Pitkänen-Walter, Aarno Salosmaa, Teemu Saukkonen, Anu Tuominen, Anna-Kaisa Ant-Wuorinen, Antti Arkoma, Eeva-Liisa Isomaa, Esa Laurema, Antti Linnovaara, Antti Maasalo, Eeva Tervala and Juha Okko, Museu da Água, Lissabon, 1.10.-13.11.2004, www.epal.pt, www.artists.fi/painters

Tatjana Bergelt, Sari Kemppinen, Ilari Kähönen, Kuutti Lavonen, Anitta Ruotsalainen and Ritva-Liisa Virtanen, Museu Fondacao António Almeida, Porto, 29.10.-13.11.2004

Romania

Me, Myself, Nykarleby and I, Albert Braun, Vector Gallery, Iasi, April 2005

Russia

Anssi Hanhela, Pia Hentunen, Pekka Homanen, Veijo Hukka, Toivo Jaskanen, Helena Kaikkonen, Minna Kangasmaa, Teijo Karhu, Jukka Niskanen, Anneli Kokko, Kaarina Kuusisto-Lukkari, Hannu Lukin, Moosa Myllykangas, Leena Nylander, Maija Paavola, Samí Parkkinen, Eeva Riikonen, Riikka Soininen, Kari Södö, Taidetoimisto, Tarja Tella, Anu Torikka and Helena Tuura, Art Museum of Karelia Republic, Petroskoi, 24.8.-24.9.2004

Leo Rannikko, Menschikov Museum, Moskow, 1.10.-15.10.2004

Ars Fennica 1991-2003, Markus Copper, Heli Hiltunen, Pauno Pohjolainen, Silja Rantanen, Heli Rekula, Johan Scott, Anu Tuominen and Maaria Wirkkala, The State Russian Museum, The Marble Palace, St. Petersburg, 25.11.2004-9.1.2005

Serbia

How 2 End a Message, part of 45th October Salon, Minna L. Henriksson, Karri Kuoppala, John Mäkinen and Perttu Saksa, Belgrade, 9.9.-25.9.2004, www.how2end.com

Situated Self - Confused, Compassionate and Conflictual, FinnFemFel, Albert Braun, Fanni Niemi-Junkola and Jukka Korkeila, Belgrade Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade, 5.2.-14.3.2005

South Korea

Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Kivi Sotamaa and Markus

Holmsten, Busan Biennale of Contemporary Art, Busan Metropolitan Art Museum, Busan, 21.8.-31.10.2004

Spain

Manifesta 5, Anu Pennanen and Laura Horelli, Donostia - San Sebastián, 11.6.-30.9.2004, www.manifesta.es

Jaakko Pernu, La Galeria, Barcelona, 9.9.-19.10.2004

September 11th, Pia Lindman, Museum Reina Sofia, Madrid, 11.9.2004

Periferias, Irma Luhta, Huesca, 30.10.2004, www.periferias.org

Marita Liulia, Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid, 15.10.2004-9.1.2005

Silja Puranen, La Galeria, Barcelona, 21.10.-30.11.2004

Loop 04, Charles Sandison, Barcelona, 18.11.-21.11.2004, http://loop.newartbcn.com/index_uk.html

Mem 04, Tellervo Kalleinen, Catalogo General Gallery, Bilbao, 25.11.-10.12.2004, www.musicaexmachina.com

Elina Brotherus, Miklos Gaál, Ilkka Halso, Anu Pennanen, Tellervo Kalleinen, Pertti Kekarainen, Ola Kolehmainen, and Mika Taanila, Galería Salvador Díaz, Madrid, 10.12.2004 - 30.1.2005, www.salvadordiaz.net

Nacho Angulo & Rax Rinnekangas, Galleria Almirante, Madrid, 17.12.2004-16.1.2005, www.galeria-almirante.com

Európia, Rax Rinnekangas, Salas de exposiciónes del área de cultura del ayuntamiento de Pamplona, Pamplona, 17.1.-17.2.2005

Charles Sandison, Arco05/Galerie Max Estrella, Madrid, 10.2.-14.2.2005, www.arco.ifema.es

The Great Wall, Riiko Sakkinen, 29 Enchufes/Espacio F, Madrid, 1.2.-27.2.2005

Joonas Kota, Galeria Serilla, Barcelona, April 2005

To Be on View, Fotonauta, Markus Henttonen, Gallery of Photography, Barcelona, July 2005

Charles Sandison, Galeria Max Estrella, Madrid, September 2005, www.maxestrella.com

Sweden

Det förlorade paradiset, Osmo Rauhala, Millesgården, Lidingö, 28.8.-2.10.2004

Rita Jokiranta and Elena Näsänen, Södertälje Konsthall, Södertälje, 28.8.-17.10.2004, www.konsthall.sodertalje.se

Juha van Ingen, Röda Sten, Gothenburg, 4.9.-17.10.2004, www.rodasten.com www.solustudio.com

Nina Korhonen, Finlandsinstitutet, Stockholm, 8.10.-23.10.2004, www.finlandsinstitutet.se

Elina Brotherus, Galleri Stefan Andersson, Umeå, 9.10.-1.11.2004

Petra Lindholm and Matti Kallioinen, Skulpturens hus, Vinterviken, 14.10.-28.11.2004, www.skulpturenshus.se

Santeri Tuori, Bror Hjorths Hus, Uppsala, 16.10.-21.11.2004

Kimmo Schroderus, Galleri 21, Malmö, 16.10.-31.10.2004, www.galleri21.com

Salla Tykkä, Finlandsinstitutet, Stockholm, 27.10.-20.11.2004, www.finlandsinstitutet.se

Criss-Cross, Veli Granö, Gun Holmström, Laura Horelli, PV Lehtinen, Aurora Reinhard, Mika Ronkainen and Mika Taanila, Baltic Art Center Visby, 31.10.-12.12.2004, wwwbalticarlcenter.com

Love & Death, Tuija Lindström, Art space 300m3, Göteborg, 5.11.-28.11.2004

Ville Mäkikoskela, Galleri Konstepidemin, Göteborg, 27.11.-12.12.2004, www.konstepidemin.com

The 3rd Nordic Biennial for Computer Based and High Tech Art, Mika Taanila, Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, 27.11.2004-23.1.2005, www.konsthall.malmo.se

Faunomania, Kaisu Koivisto and Saara Ekström, Röda Sten, Göteborg, 29.1.-6.3.2005, www.rodasten.com

Mari Rantanen, Millesgården, Lidingö, 29.1.-13.3.2005, www.millesgarden.se

Whatever Happened to Social Democracy/In2052, Laura Horelli, Rooseum, Malmö, 29.1. - 10.4.2005

Heli Rekula, Gun Holmström, Marja Kanervo, Aarne Jämsä, Jiri Geller, Marko Vuokola and Jukka Vikberg, Örebro Konsthall, Örebro, 26.2-3.4.2005

Die vierte Generation, Susanna Kekkonen, Noomi Ljungdell, Tuomo Rainio, Milja Laurila, Ari Kakkinen, Wilma Hurskainen, Ea Vasko, Maria Lähteenmäki, Jari Silomäki and Ville Lenkkeri, Centrum for fotografi, Stockholm, March 2005, www.centrumforfotografi.com

The Helsinki School, Elina Brotherus, Stefan Bremer, Joakim Eskildsen, Miklos Gaál, Veli Granö, Nanna Hänninen, Ilkka Halso, Maarit Hohteri, Tiina Itkonen, Ulla Jokisalo, Aino Kannisto, Sanna Kannisto, Sandra Kantanen, Pertti Kekarainen, Timo Kelaranta, Marjaana Kella, Ola Kolehmainen, Andrei Lajunen, Janne Lehtinen, Jouko Lehtola, Ville Lenkkeri, Niko Luoma, Juha Nenonen, Riitta Päiväläinen, Jyrki Parantainen, Jorma Puranen, Heli Rekula, Ari Saarto, Magnus Scharmanoff, Jari Silomäki, Santeri Tuori, Pekka Turunen and Marjukka Vainio, Kulturhuset, Stockholm, 8.3.-8.5 2005, www.kulturhuset.stockholm.se

Anu Tuominen, Elina Merenmies, Pamela Brandt, Marianna Uutinen and Nina Roos, Kabusa Konsthall, Köpingebro, 19.3.-17.4.2005, www.kabusakonsthall.com

Eemil Karila, Finlandsinstitutet, Stockholm 19.5.-18.6 2005

Switzerland

Zeitgenössiche Finnische Fotografie - Finnish Contemporary Photography, Ilkka Halso, Ulla Jokisalo, Sandra Kantanen, Pertti Kekarainen, Ola Kolehmainen and Santeri Tuori, Roellin/ Duerr Galerie, St. Gallen, 11.9.-6.11.2004, www.roellinduerr.com

Version, Mika Taanila, Attitudes, Space for Contemporary Arts, Geneve, 23.11.-18.12.2004

Charles Sandison, Art Basel/Galerie Arndt & Partner, Basel, 5.6.-20.6.2005, www.artbasel.com

Taiwan

Cities on the Move 2004, Marco Casagrande, Taipei, 5.11.-12.11.2004, Taipei Modern Art Museum, Taipei, December 2004

Turkey

Along the Gates of the Urban, Tea Mäkipää, Istanbul, 25.9.-10.10.2004

Melek Mazici, Culture centre of Diyarbakir, Diyarbakir, 29.10.-24.11.2004

United Kingdom

Bird's Nest Wakefield, Jan-Erik Andersson with Shawn Decker, Public Arts Centre, Wakefield, 1.9.-31.10.2004

Jukka Vikberg, Pasi Karjula, Niels Haukeland, Kirsi Kaulanen and Heli Ryhänen, Lake Vyrnwy, International Sculpture Park,Wales, 4.9.-18.9.2004

Carnegie Art Award, Elina Brotherus, Robert Lucander, Paul Osipow, Jorma Puranen, Silja Rantanen and Nina Roos, Victoria Miro Warehouse, London, 10.9.-31.10.2004, www.carnegieartaward.com

Mari Sunna, The Approach, London, 16.9.-24.10.2004, www.theapproach.co.uk

Esko Männikkö, Liverpool Biennial 2004 – International Festival of Contemporary Art 18.9.-28.11.2004, www.biennial.com
New Contemporaries, Heidi Kilpeläinen, Liverpool Biennial 2004 – International Festival of Contemporary Art, Liverpool, 18.9.-23.10.2004, www.biennial.org.uk

Blind Sight 2, Annika Dahlsten, Leena Kela, Norman Shaw and Edward Summerton, Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, 14.10.-26.10.2004, www.royalscottishacademy.org

Magnetic North, Irma Optimisti and John Court, Liverpool Biennial of International Contemporary Art, 15.10.-16.10.2004, www.biennial.org.uk

Laura Horelli, Frieze Art Fair/Galerie Barbara Weiss, Regent´s Park, London, 15.10.-18.10.2004, www.friezeartfair.com

Charles Sandison, Frieze Art Fair/Galerie Arndt & Partner, Regent´s Park, London, 15.10.-18.10.2004, www.friezeartfair.com

PILOT-1, International Art Forum in London, Päivi Häkkinen, 16.10-18.10.2004, www.pilotlondon.org

You Go Where You´re Sent, Artprojx Cinema Series Two, Laura Horelli, Prince Charles Cinema, London, 18.10.2004, www.galeriebarbaraweiss.de

Maiden of Finland - Live, Minna Haukka, Embassy of Finland, London, 20.10.-19.11.2004

Mika Taanila and Erkki Kurenniemi, HTTP Gallery, London, 21.10.-14.11.2004, www.http.uk.net

Veli Granö and Tuovi Hippeläinen, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, 23.10.2004- 2.1.2005

Blind Date, Pia Lindman, Sculpture Center, Long Island City, New York, 24.10.2004

Heidi Tikka, Fabrica Gallery, Brighton, 12.11.-19.12.2004, www.fabrica.org.uk

Art in the Age of Terrorism, Pia Lindman, Millais Gallery, Southampton, 12.11.2004- 29.1.2005, http://www.artintelligence.org.uk/CollateralDamage/Lindman/Index.html

Facing East, Ritva Kovalainen, Sanni Seppo, Riitta Päiväläinen, Marja Pirilä, Jari Silomäki and Juha Suonpää, The Gallery, The Arts Institute of Bournemouth, Poole, 20.11.2004-22.1.2005, www.aib.ac.uk

The Thread, Kaija Kiuru, Tramway, Glasgow, 26.11.-12.12.2004

Kill Your Timid Notion, Tommi Grönlund & Petteri Nisunen, Dundee Contemporary Arts, 10.12.-12.12.2004, www.dca.org.uk, www.killyourtimidnotion.org

Tommi Grönlund & Petteri Nisunen, Dundee Contemporary Arts, 18.12.2004-20.2.2005, www.dca.org.uk

Charles Sandison, Cornerhouse Manchester, Manchester, 22.1.-6.3.2005, www.cornerhouse.org

The National Review of Live Art (new territories),

Roi Vaara, The Arches, Glasgow, 9.2.-13.2.2005, www.arches.co.uk

City Breaks, Simo Brotherus, Anu Pennanen and Minna Suoniemi, Whitechapel Project Space, London, March 2005, www.whitechapelprojectspace.org.uk

New Trends of Architecture in Europe and Asia-Pacific 2004-05, Kivi Sotamaa and Tuuli Sotamaa, Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork, 10.6.-23.7.2005

Unites States

The New York Mets and Our National Pastime, Pia Lindman, Queens Museum of Art, New York, 18.7.-24.10.2004, www.queensmuseum.org/exhibitions/subway.htm

Subway Series: The New York Yankees and the American Dream, Pia Lindman, Bronx Art Museum, New York, 22.7.-31.12.2004

No lo Ilames performance/Don't Call It Performance, Heli Rekula and Roi Vaara, el Museo del Barrio, New York, 18.8.-7.11.2004

Anita Jensen, Gallery AT31, Seattle, 8.9.-3.10.2004, www.atelier31.com

Arrival, Intimate Spectacles, Pia Lindman, Flushing Town Hall, Queens, New York, 8.9.-21.11.2004

The Phantom Limb, Sari Tervaniemi and Pia Lindman, Unit Gallery, Chicago, 10.9.-3.10.2004, www.unitbgallery.com

New York Times, 09/02-09/03, Pia Lindman, the lab, New York City, 23.9.-2.10.2004, www.turfnyc.org

Blind Date, Pia Lindman, Sculpture Center, Long Island City, New York, 24.10.2004

Contemporary Finnish Art, Petra Innanen, Martti Jämsä, Hannele Kumpulainen, Kalle Turakka Purhonen, Raita Virkkunen and Marko Vuokola, Olin Hall Galleries, Virginia, 29.10.-31.12.2004

Kristian Krokfors, Tero Laaksonen, Hannu Palosuo, Kristiina Uusitalo and Kari Walden, Alex Gallery, Washington D.C., 5.11.-30.11.2004, www.alexgalleries.com

Jani Leinonen and Riiko Sakkinen, The Bower, San Antonio, 15.11.2004-9.1.2005

Art Basel Miami Beach, Kaarina Kaikkonen, Miami, 2.12.-5.12.2004, www.artbaselmiamibeach.com

Charles Sandison, Art Basel Miami Beach/ Galerie Arndt & Partner, Miami, 2.12.-5.12.2004, www.artbaselmiamibeach.com

Earn Money Without a Job, Jani Leinonen and Riiko Sakkinen, Testsite, Austin, 4.12.2004-16.1.2005, www.fluentcollab.org

Girls´ Night Out, Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Elina Brotherus and Salla Tykkä, Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts, 1.1.-1.4.2005, www.addisongallery.org; Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, 3.6.-24.7.2005, www.aspenartmuseum.org

Juha van Ingen, Blue Star Contemporary Art Center, San Antonio, 21.1.-13.3. 2005

Charles Sandison, Galerie Frank, New York, April-May 2005, www.galeriefrank.net

Blobjects and Beyond, Kivi Sotamaa and Tuuli Sotamaa, San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, 26.2.-5.6.2005

From left to right:
Reima Nurmikko, *Air*, 2001-2003, installation/ iron, stuffed crow, hologram, tempered glass, respirator, wood, colour, halogen lamp. Photo by the artist.

Björn Aho, *An Isle and Other Cuts*, 2002, installation, video and photographs. Photo by Heidi Romo.

Aino Kannisto, *Untitled (green pullover)*, 2003, c-print on aluminium, 90 x 105 cm.

Jan-Erik Andersson and Shawn Decker, *Bird's Nest Wakefield*, wood, piano wire, micro controllers, motors, width 5 m x length 5 m x height 3,5 m. Public Arts, Wakefield 1.9.– 30.11.2004. Photo by Jan-Erik Andersson.

Päivi Häkkinen, *Chamber,* installation (mixed media), Mänttä Art Festival, Finland, 2003. Photo by Timo Nieminen.

Biennials and Residencies

Below, top: *Spanish Dancer*, project by Tuuli and Kivi Sotamaa, Ocean North for the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, 2004. Image by Jani Isoranta.

Bottom: Heidi Kilpeläinen, *HK 119, 23.45*, 2004, DVD video, 2'34.

Top: Jukka Korkeila, *Ejaculation in Zero Gravity*, wall painting installation with the paintings *Eye of the Needle, Red Shift, Smoke, Tears of Eros* and *Lightning Teleportation*, 2 x 3 x 15 m, Biennale de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil, 2004. Photo by the artist.

Bottom: Tea Mäkipää, *Midsummer*, 2001, colour photo, 185 x 125 cm. Photo by Mikko Junninen.

Below: Jaakko Heikkilä, *Mary in the Kitchen, Nazervan, Armenia,* 2004, chromogenic colour print, 200 x 85 cm.

Finnish Artists in Biennials and Triennials 2004–2005

Busan Biennale 2004
21 August – 31 Ocotober 2004. *Point of Contact*, Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Ocean North (Markus Holmsten, Kivi Sotamaa). Busan Metropolitan Art Museum, Busan, Korea www.busanbiennale.org

Biennial South 2004
28 August – 21 November. Anu Pennanen, Tellervo Kalleinen, Juha Laatikainen. Sorlandet Art Museum, Kristiansand, Norway. www.skmu.no

Biennale of Electronic Arts Perth
9 September – 10 October 2004. *Sonic Difference*, Simo Alitalo. The Moores Building Contemporary Art Gallery, Perth, Australia. www.beap.org

9th International Architecture Exhibition – METAMORPH
12 September – 7 November, 2004 *Morphing Lights, Floating Shadows*, Nanna Hänninen, Venice, Italy www.labiennale.org/en/architecture

Liverpool Biennial 2004 – International Festival of Contemporary Art
18 September – 28 November 2004 Esko Männikkö. *New Contemporaries*, Heidi Kilpeläinen, 18.9.-23.10.2004. Liverpool, Great Britain www.biennial.com

3rd Ars Baltica Triennial of Photographic Art
18 September – 21 November 2004, Pori Art Museum, Finland
11 February – 17 April, 2005, Malmö Art Hall, Sweden. *What is Important?*, Miklos Gaál, Ilkka Halso, Jari Silomäki. www.pori.fi/art/satakunta/pori/fi, www.konsthall.malmo.se

The 1st Beijing Architecture Biennale
20 September – 6 October 2004. Kivi Sotamaa/Ocean North, Beijing, China.

26th Sao Paulo Biennial
25 September – 19 December 2004 Jukka Korkeila, Fundacao Bienal de Sao Paulo, Brazil. www.bienalsaopaulo.org.br

The 3rd Nordic Biennial for Computer Based and High Tech Art
27 November 2004 – 23 January 2005 Mika Taanila, Malmö Art Hall, Malmö, Sweden. www.konsthall.malmo.se

World Exposition 2005, Aichi
25 March – 25 September, 2005, *Diverse Ways of Happiness*, Tea Mäkipää. Spiral Wacoal Art Center, Aichi, Japan. www.spiral.co.jp, www.expo2005artprogram.com,

FRAME residencies 2004–2005

Australia
Artspace, Sydney. Tellervo Kalleinen & Oliver Kochta, July-October 2005

Brazil
CAPACETE, Rio de Janeiro. Seppo Renvall, January-April 2004; Sanna Kannisto & Juha Nenonen January-March 2005

Great Britain
Artsadmin, London. Johanna Lecklin, March-April 2004

Foundation for Art and Creative Technology - FACT, Liverpool. Minna Långström, December 2004-February 2005. In collaboration with the Arts Council of England, the Arts Council of Finland and the Finnish Institute in London

Glasgow Sculpture Studios, Glasgow Kaija Kiuru, October-November 2004. In collaboration with The Finnish Embassy in London and Lapland's Artists' Association

Japan
Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT]. Aurora Reinhard, November 2004-February 2005

Poland
Centre for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw. Minna Suoniemi, September-October 2004

USA
18th Street Art Complex, Los Angeles Tellervo Kalleinen, April 2004; Jaakko Heikkilä, February-March 2005

Artist Network Residency Programme, New York, Liisa Lounila, January-April 2005

Location One, New York, Santeri Tuori, January-April 2005

Curator-in-residencies in Helsinki

Sureyyya Evren, Istanbul, Turkey Janauray-March, 2004

Sezgin Boynik, Kosovo, Albania January-March, 2004

Nana Zhvitiashvili, St. Petersburg April, 2004

Nina Czegledy, Canada August-September, 2004

Victor Zamudio Taylor, Mexico City October, 2004

Picks

Tommi Grönlund and Petteri Nisunen at Dundee Contemporary Arts

The architect-artist duo Tommi Grönlund (1967) and Petteri Nisunen (1962) will show their work this fall in Finland at the Wäinö Aaltonen Museum of Art in Turku (on display until November 14), as well as in Scotland at Dundee Contemporary Arts.

In Dundee, Grönlund and Nisunen will also take part in *Kill Your Timid Notion,* a weekend event (10–12 December) of experimental sound and moving image works. The artists will present a room-size installation in DCA's Gallery 2 as the main visual focus for the weekend.

The art public became aware of Tommi Grönlund and Petteri Nisunen in 1993 with their piece *Voimavirta* (Electric Power) shown at the Titanik gallery in Turku. Since their debut, they have taken part in numerous solo and joint exhibitions in Finland and abroad.

Trained as architects, Grönlund and Nisunen did not become artists in the usual way. Their works are influenced by familiar – and unfamiliar – aspects of architecture, art and technology. Conventional methods of art making are marginal to them, they place greater value on technology and science, exploring the bodily and sensory effects and the spatiality of works of art. Their reduced minimalism is often based on basic things that affect everyone's life: light, sound or even radiation and magnetism. They want to reveal the reality that exists in our everyday life but which cannot be perceived by the senses. Grönlund's and Nisunen's works bring out phenomena that surround us, a parallel reality dense with unseen light and unheard sounds. Influences from electronic experimental music are pivotal to them. Tommi Grönlund was one of the founders of the legendary dj group *Hyperdelic Housers* and *Sähkö Recordings*, the first underground record label in Finland.

Grönlund and Nisunen question not only the conventional role of the artist, but also the established concept of what a work of art is. Instead of making their works in a studio and bringing them to a gallery, Grönlund and Nisunen create their works according to, and inspired by, the location where they will be displayed. Experiences and ideas from earlier projects influence new works, so much so that their art should rather be considered processes than individual works. This is emphasized by the role they bestow on the viewer. In the opinion of Grönlund and Nisunen, there can be no artwork without a viewer, and in certain circumstances viewers may even affect the form or behaviour of a work of art.

www.dca.org.uk
www.amen.fi

Below: Tommi Grönlund & Petteri Nisunen, *Synagogue Installation,* Centre d'Art Contemporain la Synagogue de Delme, France, 28.2-23.5.2004. Photos by Tommi Grönlund.

Helsinki: Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, August 20 – October 24, 2004 and other venues.

Tallinn: The Art Museum of Estonia Exhibition Hall in Rotermann Salt Storage September 19 – 31, 2004, Tallinn Art Hall, August 17-31, 2004, Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design November 19–31, 2004 and other venues.

ISEA 2004 Symposium in Helsinki August 19–22, 2004.

Bottom, left: Makrolab (Slovenia), The transportable research laboratory *Makrolab,* photographed in the Lagoon of Venice at Isola di Campalto 2003. Photo by Marko Peljhan.

Top: Bundith Phunsombatlert, *Path of Illusion*, interactive media installation, Wireless Experience, ISEA2004, 20.8.-24.10.2004. Photo by Petri Virtanen/Central Art Archives. © Finnish National Gallery.

ISEA 2004 – Wireless Experience

ISEA (The Inter-Society for the Electronic Arts) is an international network of media artists and researchers. A wide-ranging symposium and media art event entitled *ISEA 2004* arrived in Finland for the second time, the first being in 1994. On this occasion, however, the programme and exhibition were also taking place in both Helsinki and Tallinn, Estonia, and the actual space for active networking by the enthusiasts was a ship plying the Baltic Sea between the two cities.

The theme of the whole *ISEA 2004* – the symposium, the projects on the ship, and the exhibitions in Tallinn and Helsinki – was *Wireless Experience.* This is a reference to the constantly growing visibility of media technology and media experience in the art world – freely mobile artworks, multiple-media programmes and equipment are also being adopted and used by many media artists. The invited artists in the Kiasma exhibition were: Jan-Erik Andersson (FIN) and Shawn Decker (USA); Ian Andrews (AUST); Beeoff (SWE); Rebecca Cummins and Paul Demarinis (USA); Diego Diaz Garcia (ESP); Mathias Fuchs (AUT) and Sylvia Eckermann

(GB); Arthur Elsenaar and Taco Stolk (NL); Hanna Haaslahti (FIN); Steve Heimbecker(CAN); Pamela Jennings USA); Timo Kahlen (DE); Karen Lancel (NL); Ranjit Makkuni (IND); Ed Osborn (USA); Marko Peljhan (SLO); Bundith Phunsombatlert (THL); Leslie Sharpe (USA/CAN); Heidi Tikka (FIN) and Teri Rueb (USA).

Several of the works take the title of the exhibition literally and take place in two different parts of the world at the same time, creating wireless connections between countries, cities, individuals. For example, Steve Heimbecker's *POD* (2003) light sculpture allows us to follow the behaviour of the wind in Montreal, and the Swedish Beeoff group's *The Tentacle* (2004) connects Kiasma and the Parc de la Villette in Paris. Many works also have an interactive aspect, e.g. the Finnish Hanna Haaslahti's *Scramble Suit* (2004), named after the kinetic protective suit worn by the undercover drug cops in Philip K. Dick's novel *A Scanner Darkly.* When interacting with this installation, the user meets her/his own silhouette in real-time projection. The mirrored image

is attacked by a digital character, a kinetic monster that tries steal the mirrored image and occupy it. The user ends up in a battle with the monster to save her/his own image. This battle involves complex patterns of behaviour, and even if you lose your image you can win it back again – or lose it to wander about the screen until the monster gets another identity. Another example is the Spanish Diego Diaz Garcia's *Zona del recreo* (2003) that requires two or three people together using a piece of equipment, an imitation of a classic balancing ride from a children's playground, to try to find the first clue and start to create virtual playgrounds. This piece very positively emphasises the importance of teamwork and of human contact between both the bodies and minds of the participants.

The overall look of the exhibition reveals that minimalism and sound art seem to be a hallmark of the majority of the projects and, according to the organisers, this appears to be the trend in media art right now – the most pompous uses of digital technology can be seen in cinemas, while media art is more critical and contemplative. Ed Osborn's *Harvester* (2003) seems to

be a perfect example of both minimal and sound art – a group of moving microphones in a dark room picking up the sounds of their own signals – as does Timo Kahlen's sound sculpture *Media Dirt* (2004), which consists of large glass tubes standing in the space, constantly being filled with the sound of radio interference.

The artists participating in the *ISEA 2004* exhibition in Tallinn include: Patricia Adams and Jeff Sams (AU); N - Laetitia Delafontaine, Gregory Niel (FR), Mathias Fuchs and Sylvia Eckermann (AT/UK); I.D. - Dagmar Kase, Ivika Kivi (EE), Lucy Petrovich (US), Silvia Rigon (US/IT), Julian Weaver (UK); audiOH! - Janek Schaefer (UK); C-CRED (Collective Creative Dissent) - Ola Stahl, Kajsa Thelin, Carl Lindh, Simon O'Sullivan (SE/UK); Ian Clothier (NZ); Merilyn Fairskye (AU); feral trade - Kate Rich (UK); I-bpe - Diane Ludin with Hans Zaunere and Ricardo Dominguez (US); Sarai Media Lab - Jeebesh Bagchi, Mrityunjay Chatterjee, Iram Ghufran, Monica Narula, Suddhabrata Sengupta (IN); Nomeda Urboniene & Geminas Urbonas (LT) and Kristina Andersen (DK/UK).

The UNESCO-supported Digital Arts Award for young media artists was announced at ISEA 2004, and the first prize went to *Network of No Des* by Sarai Media Lab based in India. The second and third prizes were divided between three projects – *Makrolab* from Slovenia, *Radio Astronomy* from New Zealand and *Path of Illusion* from Thailand. A special mention from the jury was awarded both to the *Invisible Fields* project from the United States and to a Spanish work entitled *Subkulturist.*

www.isea-web.org
www.isea2004.org

Veli Granö & Tuovi Hippeläinen: Rien – Is That All?

Dressed in a yellow collared shirt, his temples already almost bald, Kari Sarmanne extends a hand towards a toy house in the middle of a miniature railway. The man sits in a red-leather chair, amid the gloom of his home bookshelves, in his lap an open briefcase, which conceals within it an entire miniature world: a railway with a small continental-European town alongside it.

In the adjacent exhibition hall another miniature railway has been built. In the middle of the empty space that it encloses stands a single building, a lot bigger than Kari Sarmanne's toy house, a magic cinema knocked together out of old corrugated iron, which proper, real people can fit inside.

The auditorium is cramped, and the elderly people's reminiscences combined with the black-and-white video image are gloomy, but the atmosphere of the theatre is warm, accentuating the human connection between speaker and listener. In each speaker's memory it is winter. In their accounts they suffer from cold, dance on the ice, travel across fresh snow, vanish into it, and in the end die.

The camera oscillates back and forth in the intermediate terrain between the absent and the present, in the fragile, vulnerable space of memory, which constructs and dismantles, combines, blurs and separates. The landscapes vary: at one point, we are at a train window, at another, on the miniature railway that runs round the hall at Pori Art Museum, from where both real-time and pre-filmed material of the surroundings and the space, and of what happens there, are relayed into the auditorium.

Veli Granö and Tuovi Hippeläinen's extensive joint exhibition at Pori Art Museum opens doors into a world filled with significant places of memory and play, theatres of everyday life, on whose stages the small and insignificant easily becomes momentous and universal, the public private, and the private a secret shared by all those watching.

As artists, Granö, who is known for his documentary photographs, and Hippeläinen, who has long worked as a photographer, are related. Both are interested in the complex dialectics of presence and absence, and in the layers of time and place in human experience. In the work of both what also causes us to stop and look is the human seriousness of play and the way the player is left alone amid people, houses and communities.

The Pori exhibition also brings out some clear differences between Hippeläinen's and Granö's ways of working. In his works Granö places himself extremely close to the people he photographs, and out of their everydayness he constructs a strange magnetic world, which acts like a charmed circle: it is hard for the viewer not to feel a powerful empathy with those depicted and with their odd, little pastimes.

Hippeläinen's works are clearly more distanced, albeit in a special way. Unlike Granö, whose works tempt the viewer into a circle of powerfully emotional and sensory presence, Hippeläinen projects her gaze further, as though, behind the projection screen and the present reality, there existed another screen and another reality into which she looks, a shadow world where we reach a point of a different presence and different experience of time.

The series of works made up of black toy houses *Asun näitä taloja* (I Live These Houses) is a successful concretisation of Hippeläinen's interest in the different, unknown reality, into which what is present continually flees.

We cannot fit into the houses, but we can take a peek into each of them.

In virtually all the houses a light is on. In the biggest house, set up in the middle of the room, there is a photograph, *Salaisuus* (The Secret), hung on the wall. Nevertheless, all that is left of the faces of the group of black-clad people standing in the middle of the forest are white outlines. The picture clearly contains some sort of community, which the viewer is nevertheless unable to identify. They are in the picture, yet at the same time absent, vanished into another time and place.

Below: Veli Granö, *Islands*, 2004, installation (detail). Photo by Erkki Valli-Jaakola.

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